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JUN 20

EDITORIAL

CLEARING THE AIR, SORT OF

As Vice President, George Bush chaired a task force that assailed environmental regulation. Then, during last year's presidential campaign, he vowed to be the environmental President. His recently unveiled clean-air package claims to make good on that promise. But rather than putting the environment first, the plan shows that Bush still carries a torch for the polluters.

First, the package fails to offer truly tough standards or deadlines. It calls for utilities to cut emissions of sulfur dioxide, the prime ingredient of acid rain, by 10 million tons by the year 2000. But that, environmentalists say, is inadequate. Second, it requires Detroit to produce cars that run on alternative fuels to reduce smog—a laudable but elusive goal. For now, auto makers should be required to produce cars that meet stringent emissions standards. Third, the plan would allow companies that spew airborne carcinogens to install less effective but cheaper pollution control equipment. They should be compelled to use the best available technology, regardless of cost. And most offensive is the provision that would permit businesses to purchase "pollution rights" from companies that have reduced their own emissions below the standards. Thus, some firms would be allowed to exceed the emission limits.

Compared with his predecessor, Bush offers a breath of fresh air. But the country needs a strong, steady breeze. Industries that cause air pollution inflict about $40 billion in health care and related costs on Americans annually, says the American Lung Association. Businesses may grumble about the price of Bush's modest plan, which could hit $19 billion per year, but they are getting off cheap. The plan is designed so most polluters can live with it. Until stricter laws are enacted, their profits will still come at the expense of the environment and our lungs.

C.L.R. JAMES
Christopher Hitchens

THE U.A.W. AND NEW DIRECTIONS
Jim Schwartz

THE PITTSTON MINERS' STRIKE
Denise Giardina

CONFISCATING CUBAN ART
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DUAL-USE TECHNOLOGY

JAPAN'S NEW MILITARY EDGE

JOHN W. DOWER

Until recently, it has been commonplace to see Japan's emergence as a great power almost exclusively in economic terms. When talk of U.S.-Japanese "joint hegemony" became fashionable only a few years ago, for example, cynics envisioned Japan as the banker of the new capitalist world order, while the United States remained its policeman. Armchair historians, for their part, solemnly observed that Japan had achieved superpower status at half the cost that prewar leaders thought necessary—that is, by building a rich nation (*fukoku*) without a strong military (*kyohei*).

Such thinking is already out of date, however, for a new Japan has just appeared on the stage. It may be helpful to think of this as the third incarnation of superpower Japan. The country made its debut as a great economic power in the mid- and late 1970s, when it burst on the scene as a dominant exporter. It moved toward center stage in the mid-1980s, when it assumed an international financial role and almost immediately became capitalism's leading creditor nation. And now, in its third incarnation, Japan is suddenly demanding attention as a major military actor. "Actor" is the operative word here—not yet military "power"—but this latest role is a commanding one nonetheless.

For the United States in particular, this may be the most shocking manifestation of Japan's new status as a global player. Americans have found it humiliating and alarming to fall behind in trade and become a debtor nation, but little short of terrifying to wake up and

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LETTERS.

THE OFFICIAL STORY

La Paz, Bolivia

After reading the article by Penny Lernoux in the February 13 edition of *The Nation* ["Playing Golf While Drugs Flow"], I am convinced that you need to look for a new Latin America correspondent. Seldom have I seen more factual inaccuracies packed into a single piece of what purports to be serious journalism. In fact, the article scarcely merits comment, it is so bad. Nevertheless, for the record let me clarify that the United States has no military base in the Beni or anywhere else in Bolivia, nor are there any plans to establish any. To suggest anything to the contrary is simply untrue, and the effort resembles a disinformation campaign.

If in the future your magazine decides to cover Bolivia again, I would suggest that your reporter take the time to inquire with the American Embassy in La Paz, and that he or she take considerably more care than Lernoux has done to get the facts straight. Anything less should not be considered journalism. *Robert S. Gelbard*
U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia

LERNOUX REPLIES

Bogotá, Colombia

My article did not say that the United States has a military base in the Beni. I originally wrote that Riberalta has "three U.S.-supported military bases." Due to an editing error, this was changed to state that Riberalta's military bases had been built "at U.S. instigation"—this altered my meaning, and there is no evidence that such was the case. On the other hand, sources in Bolivia and published documentation agreed that the U.S. government was providing matériel support for Bolivian military bases in the Beni.

Nor did I say that there were any plans to establish a U.S. military base there; what I wrote was that U.S. troops had for two consecutive years carried out large-scale maneuvers in the area. Existing bases could easily accommodate a buildup of U.S. troops, as they have in the past. That such a buildup has been under consideration is shown by the document prepared by the U.S. Southern Command in Panama cited in the article.

As to "factual inaccuracies packed into" the article, it is impossible to respond to such allegations when, with the exception explained above, none are cited.

I do not feel it necessary to be briefed by the U.S. Embassy in La Paz. I know the U.S. government believes it is running Bolivia, but I prefer to talk to Bolivians. It is, after all, their country. *Penny Lernoux*

We regret the error. —*The Editors*

ECO(REPOR)TAGE

San Francisco

Dick Russell is a good friend of mine, and a shrewd observer of the environmental movement. It's regrettable that in his March 27 *Nation* piece ["We Are All Losing the War"] on tensions in the movement he fell prey to the conventional thinking that holds that social movements, like the Estates-General in 1785, must be divided into factions and opposing camps.

A social movement, like an ecosystem, is not saddled with the burden of choice. It can, and should, simultaneously house a diversity of centers of energy, approach and style. It is certainly true that some in the environmental community are also in the thrall of this either/or thinking, however unecological it may be, and I don't doubt that many of the tensions that Russell describes exist. But the effort to analyze the movement in terms of these tensions produces sloppy and inaccurate reporting, not because Russell is not a serious and careful reporter but because the analytic framework is flawed and will not support the structure.

For example, Russell says that the strength of the direct action arm of the movement is a tribute to the fact that "the time for deals and the half measures they produce is long past." Direct action can be very effective, as Lois Gibbs notes, in stopping certain kinds of industrial investment. But it has proved highly ineffective as a tool for preserving old-growth forest diversity, whereas the lawsuits brought by "well-heeled organizations lobbying in Washington" have been quite successful. Both techniques have proved abysmal failures at actually forcing corporations to clean up inactive hazardous waste sites under the Federal Superfund programs; here the key appears to be the election of a President who will put the entire force of the Federal bureaucracy behind the problem.

Russell also credits the local anti-toxic dump group with the passage of the right-to-know sections of the 1986 Superfund legislation; the reality is that the 213-212 vote by which Congress adopted that provision was the result of a partnership between the local groups and such national organizations as the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society. More fundamentally, the decision by local groups to work for right-to-know legislation reveals that they recognize the necessity to harness the power of the Federal government to achieve their ends, just as the national organizations understand and appreciate the need for passionate organization at the grass-roots level. Indeed, the Sierra Club is probably the largest single source of funding for local organizing on environmental issues in the nation.

Increasingly, the lines between different approaches and organizations are blurring. One of the traditionally most "establishment" environmental organizations, the Nature Conservancy, is now making effective, creative use of the populist tool of statewide citizen initiatives to protect vital natural areas and biological diversity. The Louisiana toxics march that Russell mentions was the result of a close collaboration between local toxics activists, low-income groups and the "well-heeled organizations lobbying in Washington."

As for the third-wave debate, I would suggest that the choice is not between market-based incentives and direct action. Both have their place, and many of the regulations on which many environmentalists (including myself) worked have done nothing to protect the public because they failed miserably to provide business with *either* incentives or disincentives. Government bureaucracies are neither carrot nor stick; they are quicksand. New approaches are needed, approaches that put results first.

For, as Russell fears, "we are all losing the war," because our institutions, governmental and corporate, are not evolving as fast as our values or as the times demand. Trying to decide which approach or which niche in the ecosystem of the environmental movement is most vital—when all are needed—can only slow down that evolution. *Carl Pope*
Deputy Conservation Director
Sierra Club

RUSSELL REPLIES

Boston

My friend Carl Pope's points are well taken. I too believe that the legislative, legal and direct-action approaches are all integral parts of the environmental movement. It was not my intent to drive a further wedge between its various "branches." As Pope rightfully concludes, all are needed.

The primary intent of my article, however, was to point out that the strongest momentum for real change is now coming from the grass roots. These are people whose lives have been directly affected by air and water contamination: They have no recourse but to fight, no place else to go. They cannot afford to take a wait-and-see attitude about George Bush's alleged environmentalism. They feel betrayed by their government and largely ignored by the so-called Group of Ten. Among the large national organizations, only Greenpeace consistently sends staff into the field to assist in local antitoxics battles.

Diversity is crucial to any movement; separation is something else entirely. When some of the big national groups accept grant money (and even board members) from corporations like Waste Management Inc., the same company that is polluting a number of areas around the country, clearly there is a split. When large organizations end up talking mainly to each other, or to their peers in industry and government, the urgency of the situation is clouded by accommodation. Sharing skills and funding to a much greater extent with the victims of pollution is, I believe, what is required. We are all in the

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EDITORIALS.

Let's Do a Deal

Mr. J. Richard Munro
Chairman of the Board
Time Inc.

Dear Mr. Munro:

Don't swallow that poison pill. After many days of bad news, here is what I hope you will regard as glad tidings: A white knight is coming to your rescue. *The Nation* is ready to take over Time Inc.

Unlike the $10.7 billion hostile bid by Paramount Communications Inc., né Gulf + Western, which you correctly characterized as "Engulf and Devour," please be assured that there is nothing whatsoever hostile about our tender offer. As a matter of fact, it is so tender that we believe you and your colleagues will prefer it even to the sweet little $18 billion stock swap you have cooked up for yourself and fellow board members with Warner Communications Inc.

After conversations with our bankers, we are highly confident that we can do better than Paramount's $175 per share offer. Like other potential suitors, our plan is to pledge the assets of Time Inc. as collateral on the loan we

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take out to buy you, so cash will be no problem for us. Our negotiators will be the same people who persuaded columnist Calvin Trillin (who got his start as a *Time* reporter) to write for *The Nation* for a salary "in the high two figures." And as an added bonus, we are considering throwing in first refusal rights on our China policy, which has stood the test of time better than Henry Luce's.

Although the arbitragers don't seem to regard *The Nation* as a major player in the merger game, we were emboldened to make this offer by the example of money-losing Pan Am's bid to take over money-making Northwest Airlines. As you know, Pan Am's tax-loss credits made the deal plausible. As you may not be aware, however, *The Nation* has lost money for 125 years, which our research department informs us is a record among for-profit enterprises. Our tax-loss carry-forward is staggering.

We also think you will be happy with our timing. According to *The New York Times* (quoting anonymous directors of Time and Warner), it would take Paramount at least eight months to take over your company because that is how long it would take to negotiate deals with the hundreds of cable franchises owned by Time. Frankly, we believe it would take Paramount eight months because that is how long it takes Paramount to make a movie. As America's oldest continuously published weekly, nothing we do takes more than a week—thus, we could do the deal in seven days.

That's because of the unique deal we propose: As soon as we have taken you over, we intend to give *Time* and all your other properties—the Book-of-the-Month Club, Home Box Office, *People*, et al.—their independence. Paramount undoubtedly would sell off some of these subsidiaries to other conglomerates, but as a magazine founded by abolitionists, we believe in freeing the corporate slaves.

This plan should appeal to your stockholders, who will retain proportionate shares in each of these spinoffs. But it will also please the editors and publishers of your various publications, since they won't have Paramount or Warner or even *The Nation* looking over their shoulders. Speaking of *The Nation*, we are even prepared to consider having the various sections of *Time* ("Nation," "World," "Milestones," etc.) spun off as independent entities. But all of that is subject to negotiation.

We were, of course, moved by statements in the press attributed to you and Steve Ross, chair of Warner, about how the Time-Warner merger is good for the economy and the country. Indeed, those lofty sentiments inspired this offer. Ever since the Reagan Administration abandoned its enforcement of the antitrust laws and the Congressional Democrats abandoned their plan to put a cap on conglomerate size, we have been looking for a way to do our part to protect the free enterprise system. Now we have found it.

Yours truly,
Victor Navasky, Editor
The Nation

PROFILE OF A CRITIC

A Life of Theater, a documentary about the late Harold Clurman, longtime drama critic of *The Nation*, will be broadcast as part of the American Masters series on PBS on July 3. The program is narrated by Meryl Streep and Roy Scheider and includes interviews with Stella Adler, Elia Kazan, Arthur Miller and Lee Strasberg.

Deaffirmation

On June 12 a 5-4 majority of the Supreme Court ruled that court-approved affirmative action plans, known as consent decrees, from now on may be challenged by white workers. A week earlier, the Court had overturned by the same margin a longstanding Burger Court interpretation of the law that had placed the burden of justifying discriminatory business practices on employers. And last January a 6-3 majority established debilitating restrictive criteria for minority set-aside programs [see "'Stigmatic Harm,'" *The Nation*, February 13]. All three rulings directly threaten the foundation of equal employment opportunities for women and racial minorities. When it comes to civil rights, it is now clear that Reagan's Court has arrived.

The most recent case, *Martin v. Wilks*, involved white firefighters from Birmingham, Alabama, who claimed they were the victims of reverse discrimination because of a 1981 court-approved plan to hire and promote blacks in equal numbers to whites until the number of black firefighters approached the proportion of blacks in the labor force. The ruling will inevitably cause future consent decrees to be constructed and implemented in a more cautious and tentative way. Because more than 300 new consent decrees are adopted each year by government and private employers, the ruling may precipitate a flurry of aggressive litigation across the country aimed at dismantling the legal employment arrangements that address past discriminatory hiring and promotion practices.

In the wake of this decision, employers (especially in the private sector) may now decide to abandon affirmative action altogether. Chief Justice William Rehnquist's opinion for the majority clearly grants room for employers to maneuver away from implementing all but the most token of affirmative action policies, putatively for fear of violating the rights of those not covered by such plans. Moreover, even though the decision does not directly affect voluntarily adopted affirmative action plans, many such plans were modeled on consent decrees. If court-approved plans are now subject to litigation, the attack on voluntary programs cannot be far behind.

By allowing white employers to challenge consent decrees years after they have been accepted in court, the decision threatens not only future affirmative action employment policies but past ones as well. Ironically, on the same day,

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the Court declared in a separate but related ruling that three women who worked for A.T.&T. had waited too long to file suit challenging seniority rules that they claimed discriminated against them.

In one of the cruelest twists suffered by the civil rights movement, white men have successfully appropriated the language of victimization and articulated their own suffering compellingly enough to cancel out the claims of those whose suffering they in large part helped create. What is really on trial in these most recent Supreme Court decisions on employment discrimination, as perhaps it has been all along, is the very idea of affirmative action. The struggle over how best to resolve historic injury inflicted upon racial minorities as a group and on women as a group is forbiddingly complex and perennially frustrating. For the notion and, more acutely, the act of addressing past discrimination through affirmative action entails the denial of certain privileges to others, usually white men, who, though not always individually, at least as a group have benefited from past socioeconomic, educational and employment arrangements that directly and unrelentingly discriminated against women and minorities. Although affirmative action, with its numerical timetables, quotas and goals, is an imperfect means of achieving justice for the wronged, it is the best means currently available, and certainly no more unjust than the racism and sexism that precipitated its development and necessitates its continued existence.

Congress must now move to reassert its original intent in calling on employers to develop equal employment opportunities and affirmative action plans. But in light of the High Court's demonstrated insensitivity to the concerns of minorities and women, we are forced to reassess a strategy that has proved vulnerable to legal rebuff. In particular, those minorities and women who have benefited from past affirmative action policies must take it upon themselves to reignite the fight against racism and sexism at a time when social lethargy threatens from within almost as ominously as Supreme Court decisions challenge from without.

MICHAEL ERIC DYSON

Michael Eric Dyson teaches ethics and cultural criticism at Chicago Theological Seminary and writes the "Black America" column for Zeta *magazine.*

Stonewall + 20

June is Gay Pride Month. With parades and events from San Francisco to New York City, hundreds of thousands of gay men and lesbians will commemorate the weekend of twenty years ago when gay men at the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village rioted against police, refusing to be harassed and arrested any longer, refusing to accept themselves as criminals.

At Stonewall the stand for liberation was made and a mass movement for the civil rights of gays and lesbians began. But twenty years into that struggle, what do we have to show for the effort? A generation after blacks marched in the South for the right to vote, a black man made a serious run for the presidency. Twenty years after Stonewall the new Speaker of the House, Tom Foley, is gay-baited on his first day in office. For gay men and lesbians there are no more rights today than there were on the weekend of the Stonewall riot. Visibility has increased—we are, as they say, everywhere—but compared with heterosexual Americans, we are pariahs, *personae non gratae*, personally, professionally and legally. The AIDS crisis has brought attention to the gay and lesbian community, but with that attention has come greater discrimination and hostility.

In twenty-five states, sexual acts between consenting members of the same sex are still illegal. This was reaffirmed by the Supreme Court in *Bowers v. Hardwick* in 1986. According to Justice Byron White's majority opinion, homosexual acts are not protected by the Constitution because its guarantees of privacy do not extend to gays or lesbians.

Gay men and lesbians are the only minority in the country—albeit the largest minority—that it is still safe to scapegoat. When Lee Atwater and the Republican National Committee were attacked for circulating a memo that said Foley should "come out of the liberal closet" and compared his voting record to that of Representative Barney Frank, who is openly gay, the attack came not because gay-baiting is unacceptable; it came because Foley says he isn't gay, and because he is not aligned with gay issues.

But this sort of hectoring is only a part of what hasn't changed. In Philadelphia, where a gay rights bill was adopted more than nine years ago, a recent study by the University of Pennsylvania Law School found that a majority of gays and lesbians felt the law did not protect them or that they had no recourse against discrimination. A recent report by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, citing several university-based studies, finds that anti-gay violence is on the rise, and that gay men and women are four to seven times as likely to be victims of violence as any other group. In the military, anti-gay punishment is at a peak, with more than 2,000 discharges of lesbians and gay men in the past two years for consensual sexual acts. In many cities unrelated people of the same sex may not share small apartments and are denied access to public accommodations such as hotel rooms. Marriage is also off-limits to gay men and lesbians, so such couples are generally denied shared employee benefits, tax breaks, G.I. benefits, charge cards and other forms of credit. Nor do they have the right to be foster parents or adopt children. Likewise, they are denied spousal Social Security benefits and pensions. In nine out of ten cases, gay parents—particularly lesbians—are denied custody of their children in favor of the heterosexual parent. Unlike heterosexual couples, gay partners may be denied prison or hospital visitation rights, bereavement leave or inheritances.

The case of Sharon Kowalski, the lesbian who was severely disabled in a car accident six years ago and whose lover, Karen Thompson, was legally barred from any interaction with her by Kowalski's parents, has dragged through four courts and may end up before the Supreme Court. The Kowalski case is only one of many, and without spousal

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rights lesbians and gay men remain vulnerable to discrimination.

According to the stipulations of most gay-rights bills enacted in cities across the United States, gay marriage, shared benefits, shared accommodations and the like should be legal; but no cases directly challenging the laws denying these rights have been brought to court. Last month Denmark became the first country to allow gay marriage—with many of the legal benefits of heterosexual marriage. By comparison, San Francisco's recent decision to allow "domestic partners" to register at City Hall does not extend any significant benefits to gays and lesbians.

Rampant discrimination and the lack of legal recourse remain compelling reasons for many to stay in the closet, reaffirming homophobia. Twenty years after Stonewall we have not gained acceptance or legal protections. And that is nothing to celebrate. VICTORIA A. BROWNWORTH

Victoria A. Brownworth is a lesbian activist and former senior editor of the Philadelphia Gay News. *Her latest book,* Camera Obscura *(The Woman's Press, London), is about women film directors.*

UNCIVIL LIBERTIES.

CALVIN TRILLIN

The newest thing in blue jeans is the ragamuffin look. That means wearing jeans with holes in them. Just about everyone in my high school wore jeans with holes in them now and then, of course, but that had nothing to do with the ragamuffin look. In fact, if you had congratulated one of the guys in my high school on the stylishness of his bold new ragamuffin look, he might have asked you if you were looking for a knuckle sandwich.

In high school, here's what I believed about blue jeans: Anybody who wore anything but Levi's or Lee blue jeans was a weenie, a nerd, a geek, a creep and walked like a duck. In other words, I was a moderate on the subject. That was many years ago, of course, but I have never seen any reason to change my views.

When men started wearing designer jeans several years ago, I said to my wife, "Any man who wears designer blue jeans is a weenie, a nerd, a geek, a creep and walks like a duck."

My wife argued for a little more flexibility. "That's an adolescent viewpoint," she said.

"Of course it's an adolescent viewpoint," I said. "It's the viewpoint I had when I was an adolescent. I have never seen any reason to change it."

Apparently, there are now people who make holes in their blue jeans for effect. In high school we wore blue jeans with holes because if we hadn't we could not have gotten our money's worth. Blue denim becomes more comfortable as it's worn and washed, but only six wearings after a pair of blue jeans achieves comfort perfection, holes begin to appear. It's a sort of formula—the only formula I remember from high school, as it happens.

This formula was proved in an experiment conducted at Southwest High School in Kansas City, Missouri, involving many pairs of blue jeans. I was present during the course of that experiment and I can vouch for the soundness of the methodology. The experiment proved once and for all that using a pair of blue jeans is less like using a suit or a topcoat than it is like grilling a steak: At one point you have it just right. Six wearings later, it has holes.

There is a similar formula having to do with when shirts begin to fray and when they are absolutely comfortable. In the case of shirts, though, they can last in a comfortable state for something like eight months before they completely fall apart, beginning usually at the elbows. This, I'll admit, is eight months during which you are likely to hear a lot from your wife about the condition of your shirt, but it is otherwise a blissful eight months.

I don't think it's at all surprising that I haven't changed my views on blue jeans—or on frayed shirts for that matter—since high school. What is remarkable, though, is that the blue jeans themselves haven't changed. There are still precisely six wearings in them between the time they reach a state of comfort perfection and when they start developing holes.

I know what the cynics are going to say: "Ah hah! Built-in obsolescence! All this talk about miracle fabrics and these bozos can't even build in an extra perfect-comfort wearing or two before the holes begin to show up."

I wouldn't agree with that sort of thinking. Sure, there have been miracle fabrics developed since I was in high school, but nobody with any sense would put them into a pair of blue jeans. Once some of those things got into a pair of blue jeans it wouldn't be a real pair of blue jeans. As far as I'm concerned, anybody who wore blue jeans with miracle fibers in them would be someone who's a weenie, a nerd, a geek, a creep and walks like a duck.

Naturally, I wore blue jeans with holes in them myself when I was in high school. Naturally, I still do. There is nothing whatsoever concerning blue jeans that I have changed my opinion about in any way since high school. This never presented a problem before. But now we have the ragamuffin look. The other night, while my wife and I were walking down the street in our own neighborhood, she gave my blue jeans—my blissfully comfortable blue jeans—one of her inspector-general perusals and said, "Are you trying to make a fashion statement?"

This is a troubling thing to say to someone who went to high school. Do I want to risk being taken for someone who is striving for the ragamuffin look? I'm now considering placing on my blue jeans a small sign that says "Holes Strictly Authentic." But would anybody from my high school consider blue jeans that had a sign on them real blue jeans?

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MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

There is an old, tenacious and widely ridiculed idea that all people (and all peoples, for that matter) are at least intrinsically capable of the appreciation of philosophy, poetry and beauty, and are not just to be measured by their attitude to political economy or—as we have further degraded the proposition—by the attitude of political economists to them. There had better be something to this idea. During a utopian interlude in the utilitarian nineteenth century, men like William Morris and John Ruskin attempted to give expression to the yearning for wholeness, an ambition that in other quarters prompted the founding of a working-class college, separated from the high church- and empire-minded university in Oxford. It was in a hall of this institution, Ruskin College, that I first heard C.L.R. James speak, and first began to think that utopianism was too feeble and colorless a term for those few who have the courage to talk of a future we cannot yet fully imagine.

His actual or ostensible subject was Vietnam. This was the fall of 1967, and the fantastic web of official lying and bluff about the war had already been torn irreparably apart. (Don't you hate it, incidentally, when revisionist historians date the awakening of "concern" to the later events of Tet and My Lai? Anyone who cared to know the truth about Indochina knew it well before those crises.) James did not waste any phrases on the revelations of atrocities that were beginning to disturb even cold war liberals. He was a historian of imperialism, and he knew all he needed to know about free-fire zones and strategic hamlets. He understood them by analogy, from his rigorous study of the French in Haiti, the Spanish in Cuba, the British in South Africa and the Italians in Ethiopia. Such conduct toward lesser peoples scarcely rated a raising of the voice. What was impressive about the Vietnamese, he said coolly, was the proven fact that they wouldn't put up with it any longer, and had taken the decision to endure anything. This was how history was made.

He was already old by then, with a nimbus of silver surrounding his anthracite features. He had taken decades to evolve his balanced, synthesized combination of the heart on fire and the brain on ice. From early youth in Trinidad, where he made himself master of Greek classics, Shakespeare and the novel, he had progressed along an astounding number of paths, accepting the role of chance just as he strove to detect the workings of history. He had debated Bertrand Russell on dialectics; had been detained on Ellis Island and deported; had inspired the leadership of at least one Caribbean independence movement; had been the most fluent writer on cricket in the English language; had been the severest and bravest Third World polemicist against Stalinism; had been an example to a nascent generation of immigrants fighting for a place in "the old country."

The real test of a radical or a revolutionary is not the willingness to confront the orthodoxy and arrogance of the rulers but the readiness to contest illusions and falsehoods among close friends and allies. This crux occurred in James's life in the late 1930s, when the Communist International made a cynical decision to discard anticolonial activity in order to woo imperial Britain and France. With George Padmore and a handful of others, James declared that the struggle of the colonized was not the political property of any party or apparatus. His early critique of this cynicism had a presentiment of the Stalin-Hitler pact, and you can intuit the same point in a different way from his historical masterpiece *The Black Jacobins*, which shows that metropolitan France and its revolution helped emancipate the slaves, but also shows decisively that Toussaint L'Ouverture's fighters had to rely on their own sinews.

This stand, and others like it, condemned James to spend decades among the fragments of the independent, quasi-Trotskyist left. I say "condemned" because the experience was null as far as any definite gain in politics or organization went. But James did not waste even these locust years. He remained in touch with small but significant internationalist groupings, and before the end of his life, which came on May 31, he was celebrated in Africa and the Caribbean in a way that his former detractors of the Stalin period could never hope to be. His last public speech in America was a vindication of Solidarity in Poland and an affirmation of the unguessed-at capacity of an educated working class.

In Paul Buhle's admirable book *C.L.R. James: The Artist as Revolutionary* there is a moment from one of James's early cricket columns, written for the *Manchester Guardian* in the 1930s by the only black correspondent then allowed to comment on the great game. James had decided to challenge the quotidian reader with a comparison to the ancient Olympiad:

> What would an Athenian have thought of the day's play? Probably that the white-flannelled actors moving so sedately from place to place were performing the funeral rites over the corpse of a hero buried between the wickets.

James had a developed sense, derived partly from Hellenism, of the symmetry and grace latent in art and work. He makes an excellent guide to the increasingly one-dimensional argument over "Western civilization." He needed no instruction about slavery and ethnocentricity. But he had no tolerance either for callow, sectarian diatribes, and shuddered at the philistinism that reduces Shakespeare to "a white male." Some have seen in his early short stories from Trinidad a premonition of the best of Naipaul. Both men benefit by the comparison, if it is honestly made.

In old age he made his home in London, on the Railton Road in Brixton, "front line" between the two declensions of Thatcherism. I called on him there last summer, and found him infirm and rather deaf but still engaged. Handing him my copy of *The Black Jacobins* for an inscription, I was asked what I'd like him to write. "If you just put 'fraternal greetings' I'll be honored." He gave me a searching look. "I do not," he said, "believe in the eternal." To conflate eternity with fraternity seemed a most elegant mistake for a man of his years and of, in every sense, his history.

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ARTICLES.

U.A.W. NEW DIRECTIONS

Struggle for the Soul of the Union

JIM SCHWARTZ

For business, 1988 was, as *Fortune* recently put it, "the biggest blowout ever": record sales, record profits, prosperity unequaled in the thirty-three-year history of Fortune 500 accounting. At the head of the list stands General Motors, followed immediately by Ford and only a bit farther down by Chrysler, their combined profits exceeding $11 billion.

Members of the United Auto Workers saw little of this windfall. Instead, they endured forced overtime or continued idleness; watched as production continued to move to low-wage plants overseas; and listened with increasing frustration as U.A.W. International officers such as western regional director Bruce Lee extolled the importance of "sharing responsibility with management for the plant's success in the marketplace." To attain last year's giddy heights, for example, G.M. managers had the responsibility of cutting 22,000 hourly workers; those G.M. workers had the responsibility of walking away without a fuss.

From within the U.A.W., activists under the banner of New Directions have joined to confront this concept of labor-management "cooperation," urging a class-conscious adversarial unionism based on rank-and-file power, in order to fight more resolutely for higher wages and against plant closings, forced overtime and the elimination of work rules intended to ease strain on the shop floor. New Directions represents what Eric Mann, a former line worker and the author of *Taking On General Motors*, calls "the best of what the U.A.W. had been." But because any challenge to the culture of "cooperation" implies a challenge to the union leadership that has embraced it, New Directions represents something else as well. "The U.A.W. International," says Mann, "has forced the insurgents to understand that they have to become the union's future, not simply the best version of its past." To dissident workers this means democratizing their union, redirecting its attention to the needs of the rank and file and their community, and, ultimately, asserting its position in a resurgent labor movement capable of acting politically for broader social change. To the U.A.W. International and the Administration Caucus that dominates the union, it means a threat to one-party rule.

The New Directions insurgency began three years ago to promote an electoral bid by one worker, Jerry Tucker, in the U.A.W.'s St. Louis–based Region 5. Since then it has spread to every region in the country and now involves hundreds of workers in elected positions as well as thousands of supporters. As it has grown, the movement has faced more strenuous opposition from the union hierarchy, with alleged abuses ranging from intimidation and threats to physical attacks, fraud and the outright stealing of elections.

The most prominent targets of the International's backlash are Jerry Tucker, running for re-election as regional director, and Don Douglas, a candidate for the directorship of Region 1/1B, which covers the U.A.W. heartland between Detroit and Flint, Michigan. Victories by the two candidates would enhance the power and prestige of New Directions. Regional directors oversee collective bargaining and are responsible for political action in the areas they serve. They also sit on the twenty-two-member International Executive Board, which sets policy for the union.

In predominantly black Chrysler plants, International backers of Douglas's opponent, Bob Lent, who like Douglas is white, slandered Douglas as a racist and his supporters as "Klansmen." Despite substantial leads initially, at the end of the campaign neither Douglas nor Tucker had enough delegate votes going into the U.A.W. convention on June 18 to win a seat. Both say the elections were stolen and have filed formal protests with the convention credentials committee. They charge ballot-box stuffing, improper use of union funds and the complicity of auto companies in helping establishment candidates (frequently by implying there would be plant closings if workers voted for a New Directions slate). Among the abuses and illegalities they cite:

§ U.A.W. president Owen Bieber asked 800 International staff members to give $500 each for a campaign war chest to crush New Directions candidates. Tucker's lawyer, Chip Yablonski, says, "The solicitation of union staff contributions as a condition of employment means that staff people hired with the members' dues are being used as a political instrument of the administration in direct violation of the Landrum Griffin Labor Law." Yablonski has asked the Labor Department to investigate the fund.

§ Bill Casstevens, the U.A.W.'s secretary-treasurer, illegally used union funds to travel from his base in Detroit to make some fifteen appearances on behalf of Tucker's opponent, Roy Wyse.

§ In Michigan, Lent's supporters campaigned on time paid for by the company and the union. Lent was allowed to campaign in plants that Douglas was barred from entering.

§ Officials at a Ford plant in Kansas City refused entrance to Victor Reuther, brother of the late Walter Reuther and a founding member of the U.A.W., who had come to campaign for Tucker. At that very moment, Wyse was touring the plant with two International representatives from Detroit.

§ Tucker and Douglas were denied access to meetings of U.A.W. retirees, who were told that the New Directions candidates sought to prevent them from participating in the union.

In different ways, the experiences of Tucker and Douglas have been replicated in union local elections of New Direc-

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tions candidates throughout the country, and in anticipation of further chicanery the two have invited the Association for Union Democracy to attend the convention as an independent monitor of the union's election procedure. This is akin to an opposition party in a Third World country calling on international observers to secure a fair vote. The comparison has not been lost on the activists, who see this election as a transition for New Directions from an insurgency to what Tucker calls a "second party within the union," one vying for power rather than simply pressing for reform.

Although he and Douglas plan to take their fight to the courts (at press time the credentials committee had failed to act fairly on their protests), Tucker is quick to say that the future of the movement doesn't depend on the electoral results of 1989. In fact, activists say the campaigns this spring have galvanized new support for the movement, getting formerly apathetic workers involved. New Directions committees have begun popping up all over the country, notes Reuther, pointing especially to the coalition chosen to lead the local in the first elections ever held at Mazda's plant in Flat Rock, Michigan, a plant where the International has given its blessings to the "team concept," centerpiece of labor-management "cooperation." David Yettaw, president of Local 599 in Flint, reports a dramatic growth in supporters, climbing in the past two years from about twenty to 800. At a conference of union insurgents sponsored by the magazine *Labor Notes* in May, U.A.W. workers talked of the importance of setting up local caucuses, running for local leadership positions and formalizing New Directions in a coordinated, nationwide network.

Union democracy is a crucial bridge to any far-reaching New Directions strategy. Its absence first became glaring during Tucker's 1986 campaign for the directorship of Region 5, an election that was ultimately decided by the courts. International staff representatives offered jobs to delegates in exchange for votes, threatened to stop processing local grievances and even assaulted Tucker supporters physically [see Eric Mann, "New Directions for the U.A.W.," *The Nation*, June 11, 1988]. But dissidents charge that the union also undercuts democracy in more insidious ways, denying the rank and file vital information and making numerous decisions in private. Reuther calls attention to the contract for G.M.'s Saturn plant in Tennessee, in which U.A.W. chiefs agreed to the virtual elimination of job classifications, negotiating secretly with the company in violation of the union's constitution [see Anthony Borden, "G.M. Comes to Spring Hill," *The Nation*, June 21, 1986].

Furthermore, the lack of accountable leadership to represent rank-and-file interests compounds the membership's fundamental conflicts—as workers up against corporate management and as citizens up against the corporate-bureaucratic elite of this country. "Our [union] leaders should have taken stronger measures when General Motors closed eight plants in Michigan and opened up eleven in Mexico," said Selwyn Rogers, a New Directions activist and co-chair of the Midwest Black Rank and File Exchange, in a speech last year. "When G.M. demanded tax abatements with no promises of job creation, and when General Motors showed it was interested only in improving productivity and not quality of work life, they should have taken a stronger stand. But they never did."

Instead, the leadership endorsed "jointness," the cornerstone of its latest national agreements with the Big Three, pledging to work with management for a common goal—such as boosting company market share, says Peter Downs, recording secretary of Local 2250 in Wentzville, Missouri. Since then, local officials allied with the union establishment have been less willing to file grievances and enforce the contract. Frank Hammer, a local president in Warren, Michigan, says that in his plant "there's an informal agreement between management and the shop committee to shoot for zero grievances." (Shop committees, not local presidents, are responsible for local grievance procedures.) The idea is that disputes are meant to be handled as they arise, rather than going through the extended grievance procedure. The reality, Hammer says, is that rank-and-file problems are simply ignored. At Local 2250, for example, shop members

DRAWINGS BY FRANCES JETTER

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have lodged many complaints about the shop committees' unwillingness to administer the grievance procedure.

With the union as a partner, companies have radically restructured shop floor relations to the detriment of the workers. In some cases the old system in which workers had clearly stated rights protected by contract has been superseded by the so-called living agreement, by which union local and company officials can change the rules of the contract at will. Where workers have attempted to resist this and other forms of "cooperation," management has threatened to close a plant or move work away from it. This practice of pitting worker against worker, known as whipsawing, creates bidding wars among plants and violates the U.A.W.'s traditional principles of solidarity. Craig Zabala, an assistant professor of management at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, says companies use whipsawing to force workers to make concessions on work rules for nothing in return but vague promises that the plants will stay open, promises that are often broken once the concessions are made. New Directions supporters charge that the International sanctioned whipsawing in its 1987 contracts with G.M. and Ford and 1988 contract with Chrysler, providing that local leaders and plant managers will look for ways to boost productivity and make changes so as to compete with other plants.

The Japanese-style teams, in which employees work in small groups and are asked to do a variety of jobs, represent the farthest step in the current restructuring. Company and union promoters suggest team plants give workers greater responsibility in the production process and a chance to solve problems creatively. But critics insist that workers at team plants are subject to far greater stress and regimentation than those in traditional ones. Jane Slaughter, a former auto worker and the author, with Mike Parker, of the book *Choosing Sides: Unions and the Team Concept*, says that with the teams have come assembly-line speed-ups, the elimination of many of the less taxing nonskilled jobs and an ideology in which worker solidarity is sacrificed to the goal of increased productivity.

Nelson Lichtenstein, a professor of history at the University of Virginia, notes, "Team production and the effort to eliminate job classifications are strikingly similar to some of the labor control techniques that bedeviled auto workers in the industry's early nonunion years." In those days the foreman exercised authority through a straw boss, an hourly worker who assigned daily tasks and recommended favored workers for minor promotions or wage increases. In team plants the distinction between workers and management has again begun to blur, with the team leader playing the role of a modern straw boss, working to help management increase productivity instead of protecting workers' rights.

Given the extent of the challenges facing workers, the preoccupation with union democracy may seem like a narrow struggle. But as Tucker says, "If we can't win procedural fights, how can we change anything?" And Reuther says the democratic control of the union by the rank and file must be the infrastructure for any more extensive political action. New Directions forces are therefore going to the convention on June 18 to fight for direct election of union officers. (Members of the International Executive Board are elected by delegates at the convention and rarely face opposition.) In addition, they want reforms to insure that union elections are fair and to make union representatives on labor-management committees elected, rather than appointed, posts. Under "jointness" programs, union local officials can name people to full-time jobs on committees that look at a range of issues, such as quality of work and attendance. Those employees are then available to do political work: campaigning for establishment candidates or voting as a bloc on important issues at union meetings. New Directions also hopes to institute an electronic roll call for future conventions—thus speeding up the three- to four-hour process and allowing delegates to vote on a greater number of substantive questions—and to put an end to the omnibus bargaining resolution, by which workers are given a take-it-or-leave-it choice on a single measure which might cover everything from bathroom breaks to whipsawing, in advance of contract negotiations.

The real work of establishing New Directions as the U.A.W.'s second party must then take place after the convention, on the shop floors and in the union locals. The work of revitalizing the labor movement as a progressive social force must take place there as well, but also in the community and the political arena. What is the work of a labor union? Tucker asks. "To bargain collectively, to organize and to create an environment in which collective bargaining and organizing can prosper." Or, as others in New Directions put it, to develop new strategies in a dramatically changing time to protect the interests of the working class and join with other sectors of society on issues of jobs, the environment and social life. This is a multiyear project, which will require alliances with other labor unions and political activists. It is what the workers of U.A.W. New Directions envision as they make their first concerted moves for the renewal of democracy. □

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THE PITTSTON STRIKE

Solidarity In Appalachia

DENISE GIARDINA

St. Paul, Virginia, is silent at 5 in the morning. A mountain fog rings the streetlights. I have driven all the night of May 11 with a friend, and we find refuge in Hazel's Place, the only storefront on the main street that shows lights. We are the first customers. A gray-haired woman serves as both waitress and cook. While she scrambles eggs and fries bacon, we ask her about the United Mine Workers' strike at the local Pittston Company coal mines. She is cautious, doesn't say much. Then we explain that we have come to be arrested on the picket line.

She is happy to talk. She leans on the counter while we eat and tells us her old man has already been on the line since 2:30 that morning. He has been arrested twice for sitting in front of coal trucks. She has not been arrested. Her husband gets only $200 a week in strike benefits, and they are not eligible for food stamps. So she took a job twelve hours a day at the restaurant.

She understands recent history. "All this started when Reagan fired those Patco [Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization] workers," she declares. "We should have come right out then, everybody that works."

We tell her we are West Virginians now living in North Carolina, where union is a bad word. She shakes her head. "Everybody needs a union," she says. "Everybody." She takes our hands when we leave, squeezes hard. The restaurant is still empty and she retreats to a corner.

Few Americans seem to be aware of the two-month-old strike against Pittston mines in Virginia and West Virginia. The Eastern Airlines strike has received more national attention, and yet nowhere are the issues so stark, the stakes so high, as in the heart of the Appalachians.

The Pittston Company is the leading coal producer in Virginia and a major force in West Virginia and Kentucky as well, making it the second largest exporter of coal in the United States. Pittston's coal production has gone up 72 percent in the past four years, and the company turned an overall profit of $48.6 million in 1988. In the past, Pittston was a member of the Bituminous Coal Operators' Association (B.C.O.A.), which negotiates contracts with the United Mine Workers. But in February 1988 Pittston refused to be bound by the new B.C.O.A. contract, objecting in particular to clauses guaranteeing laid-off workers preferential hiring at subsidiary operations. (The U.M.W. had agreed to concessions on their pension fund in exchange for job security and such transfer rights.) Three years earlier, the A.T. Massey Company had pioneered a similar path and was largely successful in turning its mines into nonunion operations despite a long and bitter strike. Like Massey, over the past five years Pittston has been transferring operations to a group of nonunion subsidiaries and holding companies, laying off 4,000 miners out of a total work force of 6,000. Many miners believe companies like Massey and Pittston are the stalking-horses for an industry-wide repudiation of an organized work force. And of all the workers in this country, perhaps none would suffer more from the loss of a union than coal miners.

Pittston has already demonstrated its callousness. In February 1988 the union declared that its workers would stay on the job as an act of good faith despite a longstanding tradition of refusing to work without a contract. Expecting a strike, Pittston had already hired a notorious "security firm," the Vance Security Asset Protection Team, which recruits from the ranks of right-wing mercenaries and has a history of attempting to provoke violence. Moreover, the company immediately cut off all medical benefits for widows, retirees and disabled miners. When a *Los Angeles Times* reporter asked about the suffering this action would cause, Pittston spokesman William Byrne replied, "It's like a credit card that expires. Theirs expired." Still, the union kept its members at work for fourteen months, hoping to get contract talks going. Finally, on April 5, faced with no other choice, the miners walked out. In addition to traditional picket lines, the U.M.W. organized a series of sit-ins at plant gates, involving miners, their families, clergy and supporters in the surrounding communities.

Pittston's name is notorious in the Appalachian coalfields. In 1972, a dam of coal waste maintained by Pittston broke at the head of West Virginia's Buffalo Creek and wiped out an entire hollow, leaving 125 dead and thousands homeless. Residents of Buffalo Creek had repeatedly complained to the company that the dam was unsafe but had received no response. After the tragedy, a Pittston spokesman called the dam break "an act of God." Pittston later paid a total of $26 million to survivors of the flood.

I was a college student at the time of the Buffalo Creek disaster. The experience taught me that not only miners were expendable; women and children were fair game too. Memories of Buffalo Creek follow me as we drive down the winding road to the Moss No. 3 mine. A billboard on one curve has been marked with a hand-made slogan: "Pittston Hates Old People."

The company sees the cutoff of medical benefits, and indeed its entire labor strategy, differently. Paid advertisements in regional newspapers set out the Pittston position. Pittston says: "Protecting jobs and coal-mining communities are reasons why we are working so hard to achieve a new labor agreement that improves the lives of our employees and, at the same time, reinvigorates the coalfields." Pittston says: "At no time have we indicated that we would eliminate the union, nor do we desire to do so." Pittston president Michael Odom says miners are striking over jobs that don't exist, despite the fact that he is bringing in scab labor. In an

Denise Giardina grew up in a West Virginia coal camp and is the author of Storming Heaven, *a novel about the mine wars of the early 1900s.*

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interview with a Richmond newspaper reporter, he said of miners with roots deep in the Appalachian mountains, "They just won't leave, for some reason."

Around a hundred people are gathered at the main picket site in front of the Moss No. 3 preparation plant. The miners, mostly men, wear camouflage, as do many of the women who have gathered. Others wear camouflage scarves around their necks. It is a symbol of solidarity, much as black and white miners in the 1920s wore red bandanas and proudly called themselves rednecks. Camouflage also serves a tactical purpose, confusing the security men with video cameras who stand on a rise in front of the plant and film us. In my "civvies" I stand out, as does my friend in clerical collar, and the cameras linger in our direction for the first few minutes after our arrival.

A plywood shack stands beside the gate to provide shelter. A sign nailed to the shack proclaims, "This is Southwest Virginia Not South Africa." I recall a homemade sign at a Pittston mine in Logan County, West Virginia, that made the same connection:

Stop Pittston
Stop Apartheid
Stop Scab Labor
South Africa Is Here in USA

Indeed, Pittston officials say that competition from South African coal mines has, in part, spurred their actions. But the U.M.W., which has been in the forefront of the anti-apartheid boycott of Royal Dutch/Shell—the owner of many South African mines—has refused to let apartheid wages become the standard.

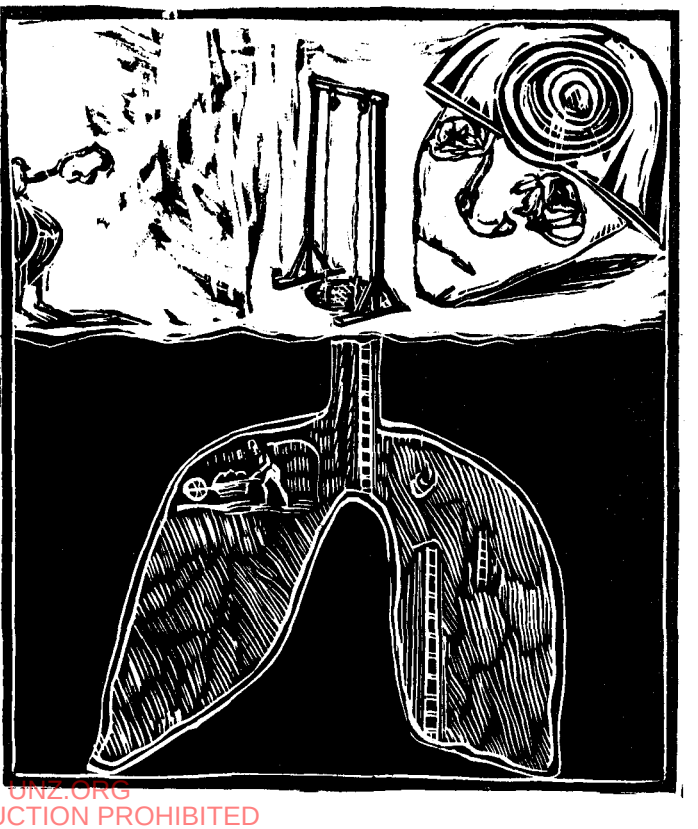
Virginia State Police are parked across the road in eight patrol cars, but as the crowd grows larger they move across to stand facing us. Some are friendly and talk with the pickets, others stare deadpan. They know that when the signal is given, some of us will sit in the road and block coal trucks. The first few days they were rough during arrests, hauling people off by their hair, wrenching arms and legs. Several protesters suffered injuries that required hospitalization. But Virginia Attorney General Mary Sue Terry saw videotapes of the arrests and ordered troopers to use less force.

At the beginning of the union's civil disobedience campaign, the legal system was caught unprepared. One busload of men was driven by police from county to county in search of jail facilities for seven hours without being allowed to leave the vehicle. The bus air conditioner was broken and temperatures that day were in the mid-80s. Police dogs on board were taken off to urinate but the men were not allowed to go to the bathroom. Finally, they peed as the bus was winding its way down a mountain, so that the urine would flow toward the policemen in front.

There had been more than 2,500 arrests as of the beginning of June, and the number grows every day. Newspaper reports speak only of strikers being arrested. In fact, more women have been arrested than striking men. Wives, sons, daughters and neighbors have been carted off to jail. Support for the miners is widespread; many local government officials, newspapers and businesses have made supportive statements. [As this issue went to press, up to 10,000 miners across West Virginia had joined wildcat strikes in solidarity with the Pittston workers.]

Recently, Pittston ran another advertisement, decrying union violence. The burned-out shell of a company-owned house in West Virginia is featured, leaving unmentioned the fact that the house burned before the strike began. The ad also shows a coal truck's broken windshield while the text urges local residents to call U.M.W. headquarters and "tell [union president Richard] Trumka this community will no longer tolerate these acts of illegal 'civil disobedience.'" It does not point out that property destruction has been relatively minor and that even the state police have spoken favorably of strikers' comportment on the picket line. On a National Public Radio news broadcast, Pittston's Odom said, "This is the same thing the Ku Klux Klan do, the same thing the Nazis do, the same thing the Communists do. They come in and try to overthrow the government."

On the picket line, grandmothers mingle with burly miners. Helicopters churr overhead, ferrying scab miners from their barracks to the mine. Nothing happens for several hours except the regular passing of partially filled coal trucks. These are greeted with hoots and occasional well-placed streams of tobacco juice. Otherwise, we talk. I speak with Cosby Totten, a strong, sunburned woman, here not as someone's wife but as a miner. Cosby is a "Daughter of Mother Jones," one of forty women who were arrested and gave this as their only identification. We talk about violence. The company has pictures of truck windows broken by stones, of tires flattened by spiked balls called jackrocks. There have been 127 arrests for rock throwing, but far fewer incidents, for when a rock is thrown the entire group nearby is arrested. And miners have had their tires



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punctured by jackrocks thrown by truckers. Miners on the picket line are not allowed to carry weapons; scab truck drivers are armed. During the Massey strike, miners' homes were shot up and children narrowly missed by bullets. Pittston strikers have their own fears. "There's all kinds of violence," Cosby says. "What mining does to a person's body is violence. What Pittston did to people on Buffalo Creek is violence. We've let them say what violence is." She nods her head emphatically. "That's our fault."

Jesse Jackson has been here, speaking to 12,000 people at the Wise County Fairgrounds, where he proclaimed that miners should buy Pittston from executives incapable of running the company. In fact, on the day of my visit, a busload of miners and their families had just returned from the shareholders' meeting at Pittston's corporate headquarters in Greenwich, Connecticut, where the union launched a proxy fight designed to force a change in company policies. They tape-recorded the proceedings.

On the tape, some miners object to a proposed company policy of forcing work on Sundays, a practice that would violate the religious beliefs of many miners and keep them from attending church. A Pittston official suggests that the religious issue is being used as a "crutch." A miner responds, "I use church to get through work during the week," at which laughter breaks out in the background. The miner, serious, says, "That's my crutch in life, the whole meaning of it, because I hope to go to a better place when this is over." Another Pittston executive wisecracks, "Come to Greenwich," which is followed by more laughter.

Later on the tape, Harold Whitaker takes the microphone. He has an advanced stage of black lung disease and sleeps propped up on pillows while his lungs fill with fluid. For the past sixteen months he has had no medical card. After he and others describe their predicament, Pittston chief executive officer Paul Douglas says, "The rhetoric is getting removed from the reality." Douglas is the son of the late Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois, a friend of organized labor. Several pro-Pittston speakers heap encomiums on Douglas, comparing him to his illustrious father. In response, Lucille Whitaker, Harold's wife, rises and levels her finger at him. "I knew of your daddy. Your daddy was a good man. And you are not the man your daddy was."

On the day of my visit, Lucille Whitaker is on the picket line. At noon, thirty of us sit in the road. We are miners, gray-haired wives and wives with makeup and stylish hairdos, a writer, a priest, a lawyer in a business suit, a folk singer, Catholic and Episcopal churchpeople. We are surrounded immediately by police, warned, carried or led onto a bus from a medium-security prison. As the bus pulls out, a line of faces framed by camouflage flashes by, smiling, proud, hopeful. Everyone is cheering, then the cheers wane and the bus motor drowns them out.

While we ride the bus, in an office elsewhere, Dickenson County Circuit Judge Donald McGlothlin is planning to levy a fine of $3 million on the union for its protests. (Later a Federal judge jailed three union leaders for violating an earlier injunction against continued civil disobedience.) But we don't know this. We pass by isolated picket shacks; the miners there are watching, and salute us. We drive by houses where people sit on their front porches and wave, country stores where people clap for us behind their windows. But the bus will no longer take us through town, though it is on the way. Someone does not like the way everyone stops what they are doing to shake their fists or honk their horns like a big-city traffic jam. We turn onto a back road and wind up into the green, green mountains. □

THE CUBAN CONNECTION

Art, Intrigue and Human Rights

EARL SHORRIS

On May 5, in Miami, U.S. Treasury agents broke down the door of Ramón Cernuda's house and confiscated forty paintings on poster paper by Cuban dissident Nicolás Guillén Landrián.

On February 24, 1988, in Havana, agents of the political police stormed an art show arranged by human rights activists and confiscated paintings by a Cuban dissident: Nicolás Guillén Landrián.

In Havana, the confiscation was business as usual. In Miami, it was one of the few seizures of paintings for political reasons in U.S. history.

How the U.S. government came to replicate the actions of a state it regards as totalitarian is a tale of Cuban exiles' influence and intrigue. Lives, careers, the human rights movement, principles of free expression and even the exiles' anti-Castro movement itself were sacrificed to the hubris and ambition of the right-wing Cuban American National Foundation (C.A.N.F.) and its chair, Jorge Más Canosa, who has let slip more than once that he expects to be the next president of Cuba.

The government laid out its case in an affidavit in support of the warrant to enter Cernuda's home and office. It said the paintings by Guillén were given to Cernuda by Jerry Scott, public affairs officer at the U.S. Interest Section in Havana, who smuggled them into the United States. Cernuda was also accused of buying and selling other Cuban paintings, and he and Scott were said to be part of a conspiracy to sell Cuban art "for personal gain and allegedly to profit members of the Cuban government." According to the affidavit, the conspirators established a market price at auctions in New York City, raising the value of Cuban art so that "the holder of the greater quantity of Cuban art work (the Cuban government) realizes the greatest economic benefit."

Although the case has not yet gone to a grand jury, the

Earl Shorris is the author of Under the Fifth Sun: A Novel of Pancho Villa *(Delacorte) and is writing a book about Latinos in the United States.*

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U.S. Attorney for the southern district of Florida said Cernuda could be fined $250,000 and sent to prison for ten years for possession of the Guilléns and 200 other Cuban paintings. That is the maximum sentence under the 1963 Trading With the Enemy Act, which prohibits people in the United States from engaging in all import or export transactions with Cuba, with certain exceptions, such as the import of films, posters and other informational materials.

The tale begins in Cuba with Guillén and Scott, a 51-year-old veteran of the Foreign Service who now faces possible charges of smuggling, conspiracy and violation of the 1963 Cuban embargo. Scott has been reassigned to a temporary post in Washington, where he awaits the outcome of his case, wondering how what he calls "this living nightmare" happened to him. In Havana, he was point man for the State Department's human rights effort. According to Scott, his wife, Patricia, worked as a refugee coordinator and helped 3,000 people leave Cuba. In her job she went into the Combinado del Este Prison to visit the old *plantados* (the four men who have remained prisoners for many years rather than accept political re-education). When Jorge Más Canosa heard of Patricia's visits to the Combinado, he was so moved by her courage and devotion to human rights that he sent her an enormous bouquet of flowers.

Between them, the Scotts knew every human rights activist and dissident on the island. The couple held cocktail parties to introduce them to foreign journalists, visited the dissidents in their homes and attended their functions. The Cuban Ministry of the Exterior (Minrex) attacked Jerry last year in *Granma*, the official government newspaper. When Ricardo Bofill, a former professor of Marxism, was a leader of the movement in Cuba, the Scotts supported him. After Bofill left for the United States, where he is now on the payroll of the C.A.N.F., Jerry supported those who were left behind, including Elizardo Sánchez, who remained a socialist. Although Sánchez was acceptable to the U.S. government as a human rights activist, his position in favor of reconciliation between exiles, former prisoners and what he hoped would become a more open and democratic Castro government enraged the C.A.N.F.'s Más.

Más saw his dream of power destroyed by reconciliation. His anger turned toward Jerry Scott, the U.S.I.A. officer who had visited him in Miami in 1987 to talk about human rights in Cuba. Scott, his former friend, the man to whom Más had bragged about owning the fully armored Mercedes sedan built for Anastasio Somoza, now became his enemy. Although he had once tried to get Scott to confirm his suspicions that John J. Taylor, head of the U.S. mission in Cuba, was a Castro sympathizer or even a "double agent," Más now connected Scott in his mind with the other betrayers of his cause, especially the progressive wing of the human rights movement inside Cuba.

Más complained to the U.S.I.A. about Scott. As the head of the advisory board of Radio Martí, the single greatest achievement of the C.A.N.F., Más was constantly reminded of Scott's existence in Havana, for one of Scott's tasks was to report back to Washington on the effectiveness of Radio Martí. Although Scott has quibbled over the number of

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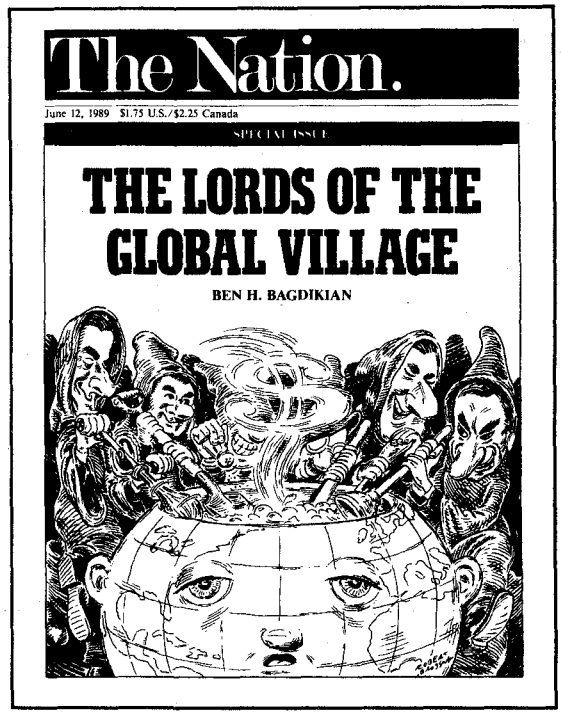

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soap operas that Radio Martí broadcasts, he says he is "a 150 percent supporter of Radio Martí. Nothing has had a greater effect on the Cuban people. There isn't a person over the age of 10 in Cuba who doesn't listen."

The opening that Scott gave to Más came through Guillén, a man with little formal education who learned his craft as an apprentice to the Dutch filmmaker Joris Ivens and others in the 1960s. It was Guillén who helped photograph the first section of the famed Cuban film *Memories of Underdevelopment*. His career in film stopped abruptly when he was caught laughing. In a film about agricultural planning, Guillén included a brief clip of Fidel Castro climbing the highest mountain in the Sierra Maestra during the revolution. There was no problem until he added a music track. To the footage of Castro climbing the peak, Guillén played the song "The Fool on a Hill." The filmmaker was accused of stealing a camera and was sent to prison.

Guillén was apparently not a model prisoner in the eyes of the government and was not entirely repentant after he was released, for he was soon back in prison, accused of being a potential problem to society. He did not endure confinement well. A huge, robust black man when he entered prison, by the end of his third jail term (six and a half years in all) he was ill, emotionally disturbed and almost a hundred pounds lighter, according to Scott.

When Scott met him, Guillén was selling the furniture out of his house to get money to support himself and his 81-year-old mother, who was suffering from ulcers on her legs and the aftereffects of careless cataract surgery. Scott and his wife gave the artist money for his paintings and even some of the furniture from their own house. The cash came to about $300. Whether the paintings were worth even that is doubtful. Guillén had no training and no money for materials; he painted on poster paper, using whatever tools and pigments he could find or make.

In Florida, Scott met with Ramón Cernuda, who is the spokesman for the Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation, the movement in Cuba led by the socialist Elizardo Sánchez. Cernuda and Scott hatched a plan to help Guillén by calling international attention to the plight of the dissident painter. Cernuda would arrange a local exhibition either personally or through the Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture. By Cernuda's account, Frank Calzón, a former executive director of the C.A.N.F. who now works in the Washington office of Freedom House, would set up exhibitions in the capital. Cernuda said he would write to the Treasury Department to get clearance for the exhibition. Meanwhile, the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service granted Guillén refugee status. Everything was going according to plan.

Scott brought the paintings into the United States in November 1988. As a smuggler, he was inept. He declared the paintings at Customs in Miami and informed both the State Department and the U.S.I.A. of what he had done. Cernuda wrote to the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the Treasury Department on December 1, 1988, requesting authorization to exhibit the works. In the letter he mentioned that Scott had brought the paintings into the country, and added: "I hereby enclose Mr. Jerry W. Scott's card in the event that you wish to contact him in Havana."

After Scott was recalled to Washington people began whispering about him. Although rightists said he was a Castro sympathizer, Ivan Arocha, a member in good standing of the Cuban Film Institute, spread the rumor that Scott had sold the work of dissident Cuban painters and kept the money for himself. Scott was a philistine, a man who had no taste in art, said a lawyer with ties to the Castro government. It must be so, went the argument, for he was an agent of the U.S. government. Others, including people inside the U.S. government, wondered how and why a right-wing lobby, living off its tax-exempt status, had been able to reach into the U.S.I.A., pluck out a Foreign Service officer and put his career in jeopardy. Few take the C.A.N.F. lightly. It has connections to President George Bush, Vice President J. Danforth Quayle and the State Department. Executive director Jacqueline Tillman and José Sorzano, a member of the board, were officials of the National Security Council during the Reagan Administration. Cubans gave Bush 70 percent of their votes and a lot of money. A C.A.N.F. official said they had close ties to Jeb Bush, one of the President's sons, and bragged about Cuban influence on the Bush transition team.

As if to demonstrate his influence over the U.S. government, Más said in a Miami radio interview on May 8 that he personally had further plans for Scott. Laughing, he told the interviewer: "You can be sure that Mr. Jerry Scott has a great problem, because this Mr. Jerry Scott is the official who is in charge of Radio Martí in Cuba. And I'll be in Washington tomorrow, because the corruption of Mr. Jerry Scott and the corruption of the Interest Section in Havana need to be investigated, and that is the next step. . . . And tomorrow I'll be with the Secretary of State." A government source said Más did meet with James Baker 3d on May 9, although that meeting was not on the Secretary's public calendar. A U.S.I.A. spokesman confirmed that Más also met that day with Bruce Gelb, the head of the agency.

Like Scott, Cernuda was anathema to Más and the C.A.N.F. The art collector and publisher had become a symbol of the young, liberal Cuban-Americans: rich, a human rights activist and a promoter of dialogue between the mainland and the island as a first step toward national reconciliation. He came into public conflict with the old militants over the Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture. The museum was founded in 1976 by Mignon Medrano and a group of her friends, all unequivocally anti-Castro, to retain "the national patrimony." After the enterprise had been started, Medrano invited Cernuda to join the board of directors. A few years later, Cernuda and other young liberals took over the board; the old guard, except for Medrano and one or two others, resigned. After that Medrano, who worked for the C.A.N.F., became Cernuda's enemy. When the museum had a showing and auction that included work from postrevolutionary Cuba in April 1988, the old guard described Cernuda and his group as "traitors, Communists, double agents, etc." A bomb exploded in front of

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the museum, threats were made, attendance fell off.

According to the U.S. government, the investigation of Cernuda was prompted by that "auction of Cuban art, some of which was in violation of the Cuban Assets Control Regulations." Three of the paintings in the auction belonged to him.

Medrano remained on the board of the museum, isolated and outvoted, but she contended to many people that she had "an ace up her sleeve." It seems she has now played the card. Her description of how Cernuda bid on one painting offers some insight into how the government may try to make its conspiracy case. She maintains that Cernuda and Pedro Ramón Lopez, another liberal and member of the museum's board, intentionally bid up the price of a painting by Mario Carreño, a Cuban who lives in Chile: Cernuda bid $90,000 before Ramón Lopez took it with a bid of $120,000. Paintings by the same artist, Medrano said, as evidence supporting her conspiracy theory, had sold in Miami for only $5,000.

The painting in question, *The Cane Cutters*, is the best-known work of Carreño, who produced a few important paintings in the 1940s and much other work generally regarded as far less valuable. Medrano did not mention that there was also a third bidder, Carlos M. de la Cruz, a trustee of the C.A.N.F., nor did she seem to know or care that the "conspiracy" to raise the price of Cuban art hasn't been very successful. According to Diana Levitt, vice president of Sotheby's, "There has been no sudden rise in the value of Cuban paintings." Moreover, Levitt explained that most Cuban art is sold through dealers rather than at auction, and the market for it is limited.

Whether Medrano got her information about the auction from the U.S. Attorney's Office in Miami or the office got its information from her is not known; Medrano said she could not comment on a case under investigation. It is known, however, that Dexter Lehtinen, the U.S. Attorney in Miami, has strong ties to the right-wing Cuban exile community. Shortly after Lehtinen was appointed by President Reagan in 1988, an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Miami complained to another lawyer that the office was launching investigations for political reasons. Lehtinen, a former Florida state senator, was a conservative Democrat until 1985. He switched parties that year, due perhaps to the influence of his wife, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a state senator from Miami who is often described as the darling of the Cuban right. Ros-Lehtinen is one of the leading candidates for the Congressional seat of the late Claude Pepper. She will have the financial and political support of the C.A.N.F., which has already begun to use its influence to determine the rules for the coming election.

The best evidence that Lehtinen's case is politically motivated is his choice of targets. There are more than a hundred collectors of Cuban art in Miami. Paintings made after the 1963 embargo have been sold for years by galleries in Miami, and in New York City by Sotheby's and Christie's, the big auction houses. Not until two years ago, after they learned that paintings were included in the embargo, did the auction houses begin to clear their catalogues of Cuban paintings with the Foreign Assets Control Office of the Treasury Department, according to Patricia Hambrecht, general counsel of Christie's. However, as recently as November 1988, Sotheby's sold for $8,800 a work by Cuban artist René Portocarrero "signed and dated 77." Yet, there has been only one investigation. Only one man's collection has been confiscated: Cernuda's.

Despite public criticism, Lehtinen's posture has been to stand by Más and the C.A.N.F. Politically, he has no choice. Even after a member of the editorial board of *The Miami Herald* wrote on May 9 that he believed Lehtinen's investigation was politically motivated, the U.S. Attorney and his wife paid political obeisance by appearing at a foundation dinner on May 20 at which the main speaker was Más.

As a result of the events surrounding Scott and Cernuda, the volatile and politically sophisticated Cuban-Americans of Miami came to an unprecedented conclusion: Jorge Más Canosa and the C.A.N.F. behaved too much like the regime in Cuba. To be against Castro was one thing; to be against freedom was another thing entirely. A letter to the editor in *El Nuevo Herald* on May 10 carried the headline, "Once Again the Terror." Next to it, Carlos Alberto Montaner, editor of the page and perhaps the most respected anti-Castro exile journalist, spoke for the community. Under the headline, "A Moral Lynching," he began by invoking Churchill, telling his readers that one of the most important signs of the existence of democracy in a society is that when there is a knock at the door at 5 in the morning, one is completely certain that it is the milkman. He went on to explain that the knock at Ramón Cernuda's door was not the milkman but agents of the Treasury Department, behaving as if they were in Prague or Havana. He said that U.S. Attorney Lehtinen had undertaken a "selective investigation."

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Nevertheless, the investigation continues. Scott, who said he had left much undone in Havana, will never return to his post. He will probably never again serve outside the United States, even if he is not indicted. Cernuda has vowed to fight his case in court on First Amendment grounds, although he knows that such battles are expensive and can consume years of one's life. Neither he nor Scott will be entirely alone. The Cuban exile community, including many people who once thought Cernuda was high-handed and too elegant, has begun to think of him now as an embattled hero. In Cuba, the young painters of Arte Calle and human rights activists have issued statements in support of Scott.

The confusion of art and politics will eventually be sorted out in the courts or in Congress. New laws have been drafted and are working their way through committees. The tragedy, the lasting wound, is to that thin sinew of nobility which leads ordinary men and women to take risks on behalf of the human rights of others. Jorge Más and the Cuban American National Foundation have increased the danger; decency is a little more difficult now. □

Japan

(*Continued From Front Cover*)

find that the United States is also losing its superiority in critical military-related technologies. The subtext of many contentious issues in U.S.-Japanese relations over the past few years is this realization that the high-tech mastery and organizational structures that lie behind Japan's commercial and financial success also have profound strategic implications.

This situation has developed so rapidly that it is not surprising to find confusion on all sides concerning where Japan is headed militarily—and, indeed, where it should be headed. The media now routinely observe that Japan is (or is about to become) the third largest military spender in the world, with a defense budget that exceeds that of any of the United States' NATO allies and is bigger than the combined defense outlays of the members of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Asean). There are, to be sure, Americans who applaud this and even ask for more.

John Tower expressed the "Go, Japan, go" position in its crudest form earlier this year. In February, while defending his nomination as Secretary of Defense, he attacked Japan's postwar "Peace Constitution," which still places certain vague limits on the size and mission of the country's Self-Defense Forces, as a "lousy idea" imposed by impractical Americans after the war. Tower was, in fact, venting a sentiment first expressed publicly by a U.S. official when Vice President Richard Nixon visited Japan in 1954.

The latest, and more polite, U.S. catchphrase calling for a greater military role for Japan is "burden sharing," which has the political virtue of meaning different things to different people. Burden sharing includes nonmilitary projects such as Japanese debt relief and aid to developing countries. Its prospective military implications range from greater Japanese financial support for U.S. forces in Japan to more expansive activities: extending Japan's territorial defense perimeter; enhancing the offensive capabilities of the Self-Defense Forces; participating in collective regional security in Asia (or elsewhere, such as the Middle East); assuming specific tasks such as providing military assistance to South Korea; and contributing directly to U.S. high-tech military programs such as the Strategic Defense Initiative.

Even establishment advocates of greater Japanese burden sharing have begun to strike a note of caution, however. In an unusual joint policy guideline published before the 1988 presidential election, for example, two former Secretaries of State, Henry Kissinger and Cyrus Vance, cautioned "against any attempt to deal with the [U.S.] deficit by pressing Japan to step up its defense efforts." Former Defense Secretary Harold Brown now warns that unfavorable global conditions could prompt Japan to embark on a substantially independent military course, as it did in the 1930s—only this time with nuclear weapons in its arsenal. This alarming vision is actually offered as a plausible twenty-first century scenario in Daniel Burstein's highly publicized book *Yen: Japan's New Financial Empire and Its Threat to America*, in which readers are asked to contemplate Japan throwing the global financial system into disorder after rearming massively. "When the pandemonium dies down, Japan will emerge as the winner," Burstein wrote. "It will no longer be simply the richest country in the world—it will also be the strongest."

This sort of tension between cold war desires to use Japan as a strategic ally and what might be called "old war" fears of a revived Japanese military machine has characterized U.S. thinking ever since the late 1940s. Indeed, where issues of force are concerned, U.S. policy toward Japan since World War II has evolved within a very explicit context of institutionalized mistrust. The so-called Peace Constitution, enacted in 1947 during the Allied occupation, was an attempt to impose enduring legal restraints on Japan's remilitarization. The bilateral U.S.-Japan security relationship established in 1951-52 was carefully designed with a double objective: to ally Japan with the United States in the cold war and at the same time insure long-term U.S. control over all aspects of Japanese military policy and development. Finally, in the late 1970s, U.S. "guidance" of Japan's defense policy was reformulated and reinstitutionalized through a variety of "joint operational studies" involving advanced equipment and systems.

Although the element of mistrust has always been present in the postwar U.S.-Japanese relationship, what we are witnessing today is of a different order. Tension within the alliance is greater than at any time since the war. And while old fears and prejudices persist, the new suspicion is not simply the product of a new level of "misunderstanding." On the contrary, it is rooted in very real and rapid transformations in the basic structures of power and influence.

John W. Dower is the Joseph Naiman Professor of History and Japanese Studies at the University of California, San Diego. His most recent book is the prizewinning War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War *(Pantheon).*

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More than a decade of serious economic friction has contributed immensely to rising tensions between the United States and Japan, but until almost the end of the Reagan Administration the managers of the bilateral relationship by and large succeeded in keeping "economic" and "military" issues separate. As the current imbroglio over the FSX jet fighter reveals, that is no longer possible.

The "spin-on" military applications of Japanese technology (i.e., technology originally developed for the civilian market) became apparent in the first half of the 1980s, and initial responses to this by U.S. defense officials were generally positive. In 1983—in a damaging blow to the anti-militarization forces within Japan—the government of Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone was persuaded to violate the Japanese embargo on arms exports and authorize military technology transfers to the United States. And in 1985 the Reagan Administration invited Japan to participate in S.D.I. research, an invitation the Nakasone Cabinet accepted two years later.

The full extent of Japanese eminence in critical dual-use technologies has become apparent only in the past two or three years, however, and with this awareness, a discernible tone of panic has been introduced in the U.S. appraisal of Japan's spin-on military potential. At both the technical and policy levels, these matters are extremely complex, but it is possible to identify at least five overlapping areas that, taken together, help clarify the mounting U.S. alarm over these developments.

§ The first area of concern can by now be recapitulated as a military mantra for our times. It goes as follows: Technology is the key to U.S. strategic superiority over numerically superior Soviet forces; electronics are the key to modern military technology; development of leading-edge military systems now depends in large part on spin-on know-how; Japan now holds the lead in an extremely wide range of these dual-use technologies, and is moving rapidly toward domination in others.

Semiconductor technology is the critical sector in these developments, and the extent of U.S. decline here was revealed in a well-publicized Defense Department study released early in 1987. Of twenty-four critical areas associated with semiconductors, Japan led in twelve, the United States in only four; of the remaining eight areas of "parity," the study concluded that the U.S. position was declining in three and improving in none. In the spring of the same year, former Defense Secretary Harold Brown warned:

> By the early 1990s Japanese-based or Japanese-owned companies will control the most advanced semiconductor technology, including the highly purified gases, the purified silicon and gallium arsenide, and the ion implanters, steppers and other machines necessary for semiconductor manufacture. U.S. microelectronic, data processing and telecommunications capabilities and their military applications may become dependent on access to those technologies, manufacturing processes and products.

Semiconductors are by no means the only area of dual-use technology in which Japan holds a significant lead, however. Brown himself went on to predict in 1987 that Japan might also surpass the United States in biotechnology, and that Japanese advances in high-temperature ceramics might be "the stepping stone to a Japanese lead in military aircraft engine design and development." In a report released last month, the Defense Department found Japan holding an imposing lead in six of twenty-two technologies deemed crucial to national security: microelectronic circuitry; semiconductor compounds such as gallium arsenide; robotics; integrated optics; superconductivity; and biotechnology materials and processing. An excellent recent study of Japanese high technology by Steven Vogel notes that Japan also "is likely to catch up with the United States in the production of space systems such as boosters and satellites." Indeed, it is Vogel's conclusion that "Japan is already a military power in the sense that it has the ability to tip the global balance of power—in either direction."*

§ The corollary of the above developments is obvious: The United States will find it increasingly difficult to avoid becoming militarily dependent on Japanese civilian corporations—the same companies, in many instances, that have been accused of practicing "adversarial trade." As a Stanford University study of semiconductor competition observes, these companies "might block or delay the transfer of what they perceive to be commercially important technology," or, "given their commercial orientation, might not follow the best technological vector for the U.S. dual-use infrastructure." Such fears explain why Washington pressured Fujitsu to abandon its plans to acquire Fairchild Semiconductor in early 1987—a deal that would have involved both nuclear missile components and supercomputers.

* Steven K. Vogel, "Japanese High Technology, Politics and Power," Research Paper No. 2, Berkeley Roundtable on the International Economy, March 1989.

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§ In contrast to the spin-on potential of current civilian technologies, the more traditional view of military R&D has emphasized spinoff benefits in the opposite direction. Such benefits remain, of course, and pose yet another conundrum for Americans: the prospect that if Japanese companies do become involved in joint military undertakings, they almost surely will attempt to exploit their access to U.S. military technology to benefit their civilian sector. The current FSX controversy is a perfect example of this fear. In approving the collaboration between Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and General Dynamics, the Bush Administration overrode stiff opposition. Arguing against the deal were the White House Office of Science and Technology, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and the Commerce, Treasury and Energy Departments—not to mention editorialists of *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Business Week* and *The Journal of Commerce*. While supporters argued that the project will perpetuate military interdependence with Japan, the basic counterargument, first expressed in a resolution submitted by twenty-one senators in February, was that "selling Japan advanced fighter plane technology represents a significant leap in capability for Japan's aerospace industry, and may eventually enable it to compete with U.S. aircraft manufacturers in the world market." As the senators pointed out in a letter to President Bush, the aerospace industry is "the only high-technology area in which the United States remains the undisputed world leader."

§ The FSX deal also has given rise to fears that Japan may be intending to develop an independent defense sector. Aircraft production is one of the most conspicuous areas in which Japan is still a "small power," and the M.H.I.–General Dynamics deal actually emerged as a compromise proposal after the Japanese Cabinet voted in 1982 to pursue independent production of its next fighter plane. In thwarting Japan's desire to produce the FSX on its own, the U.S. Administration was, in effect, reasserting its traditional policy of controlling Japan through "cooperative" ventures. As a Pentagon spokesman put it, "Our goal is to maintain security interdependence with Japan, not to drive them to an independent defense position." James Auer, a former U.S. Navy attaché in Japan, praises the FSX deal because it should prolong the linkage between the two countries' aerospace industries "for the next twenty years."

The transition from producing dual-use technology to creating an "independent defense position" would be a momentous development for Japan. As Vogel among others emphasizes, however, "Japanese ambitions for a return to [military] power in the world are no longer constrained by technology, but only by politics." Vogel estimates that Japan has the economic and technological base to become a military superpower within ten to twenty-five years if it should choose to do so. And he correctly notes that most of the traditional political constraints to moving more rapidly in this direction have been seriously weakened over the years. Thus, Article Nine of the Peace Constitution, the famous "no war" clause, has been subjected to tortuous reinterpretation that grossly distorts its original antimilitarization intent. The ban on arms exports was broken by Nakasone in 1983; the "three nonnuclear principles" have been violated by the conservative government's tolerance of U.S. nuclear weapons in Japanese ports; and the symbolically significant "1 percent of G.N.P." limit on defense expenditures was breached, again under Nakasone, in 1987.

The United States bears considerable responsibility for encouraging the removal of constraints on militarism in Japan (the Japanese opposition tends to flounder in disarray on these issues). Thus, there is no little irony in the spectacle of U.S. establishment figures now raising alarms at the possible resurgence of an armed Japan. In a twenty-five-part series on "mili-tech" published this spring, the prestigious newspaper *Asahi Shimbun*, for example, reported that Richard Perle, the Reagan Administration's influential and virulently anti-Soviet defense expert, regarded Japan's initial desire for total control over FSX production as evidence of "a movement to break away from the United States" within the Japanese Defense Agency. "There is no way of knowing," Perle was quoted as saying, "how long such a country will remain an ally." This sort of language, of course, has the potential to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Thus, the *Asahi* also cited the worry of a leading member of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party that, "more than having our technology controlled by the United States, what is far more scary is the Japanese techno-nationalism that may burst out in retaliation against this."

§ Embedded in the concept of "techno-nationalism" is a further consideration that generates mistrust: Even without a drastic break with the United States, Japanese producers of dual-use technology may find it difficult to resist becoming major exporters of military items. Perle, for one, has described arms exports as a virtually inevitable byproduct of weapons production and predicts that Japan will attempt to become a major military exporter by the beginning of the twenty-first century. On their other side, a high-level official of Fujitsu told Vogel that the imperatives of the brave new capitalist world make it increasingly necessary for Japan to develop in this direction. "We are being challenged by the N.I.C.s [newly industrialized countries] in traditional consumer markets," Fujitsu's Yasuo Komoda explained in an interview last July. "We have to go value-added, and all that is left is space and defense."

Once again, the United States seems hoist with its own petard, for Nakasone broke Japan's ban on arms exports in order to permit transfers to the United States. Now that the door is open, Japanese manufacturers may move through it in many directions—including military sales to the Soviet Union and other countries not favored by the United States. Is this a real possibility? When one recalls the notorious Toshiba incident of 1987—when the Japanese were found to be selling advanced submarine technology to the Soviet Union—the answer is definitely yes.

No matter where one looks, the military game has changed. Japan is the new player who can change the rules and is not about to go away, and who, in all probability, has not yet decided how it will play. For all concerned, uncomfortable times. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Writers and the Market–I

ALAN TRACHTENBERG

FIGURES OF SPEECH: American Writers and the Literary Marketplace, From Benjamin Franklin to Emily Dickinson. *By R. Jackson Wilson. Alfred A. Knopf. 295 pp. $24.95.*

Figures of Speech undertakes to show that certain American writers who portrayed themselves as seekers after truth or as pure artists cannot be taken at their word. They were instead deliberate, knowing and complicit producers for the literary marketplace. What gives this away is precisely those "figures" they fashioned of themselves as dispassionate thinkers or embattled artists. A professor of American history at Smith College and a superb writer, R. Jackson Wilson argues his case with precision, passion and eloquence. He submits five (six, counting Whitman in the epilogue) such figures—Benjamin Franklin, Washington Irving, William Lloyd Garrison, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Emily Dickinson—to minute investigation, showing the subtle ways each writer accommodated the logic of the marketplace. Choosing to sell (or in the case of Dickinson, not to sell) in the capitalist market, yet unable to profess that fact (Art and Culture supposedly being above mere trade), writers figured or packaged themselves as something else, something "transcendent," untouched by trade and profit motives, or indeed by commitments of any sort: artists and thinkers expressing free and unconstrained subjectivity. Of course, many readers have bought the bill of goods, taken the figure for the reality, and the text as something true to itself.

There is a certain scandalizing element here, as if a dirty secret has been let out: our "transcendent" writers pandered goods while preaching virtue. But the book is not written just to shock; it is not muckraking but a serious historical argument worked out in dense detail, happily free of jargon and generous in new insights about the logic (often ambivalent) of the public roles each figure shaped—a deft refusal of pieties about our literary past that still linger in the academic air. One need not assent to all the details or even the large shape of the argument to respect the undertaking and learn from its provocations. The book is a critique of bourgeois writers for adopting the individualist ethos of capitalism, and of capitalism for destroying earlier communal relations between writers and audiences (though these alternatives remain only vaguely hinted at by references to "patron," "church" and "political party"). The book's most important argument is that the figure of radical selfhood through which writers adapted to the marketplace in some measure mirrors the very free enterprise and cash nexus they wanted to appear as opposing.

Wilson acknowledges a debt to William Charvat, who left incomplete at his death in 1966 what would have been a major study of "the profession of authorship" in the nineteenth century. Charvat focused on actual institutions, on relations between writers, publishers and readers—on "literary economics." Wilson takes another tack—not actual relations with publishers and readers but the idea of them, of impersonal mechanisms and anonymous readers. His subject is how writers "formulated, then lived out, a contradiction between their notions of art and their actual practice as professional artists"—the difference, in short, the market made in the self-image of writers.

> Now, writers for the market contemplated an audience that was unknown, anonymous, and distant—a mere "mass," as people had begun to call it. And this helped to induce fantasies of alienation and solitude as urgent as the contrary, expansive fantasies that were encouraged by the market's offerings of success, profit, and celebrity.

These fantasies gave rise to the fabricated selves through which writers increasingly asserted at once freedom from capitalism (and from all social relations, from history itself) and utter dependence on it—the arrogant claim to an absolute freedom being the very sign and form of an absolute dependence.

Wilson has no patience with the idea that American writing expresses autobiographical thoughts and experiences, or "certain vague and ultimately silly myths about 'national character.'" Nor is he interested in ideas as such, about selfhood or society or death or democracy. He sweeps away the notion that "there is anything like a national 'experience' or 'character' or 'culture' to which any writer *could* have given voice." Instead, for writers or would-be writers "the marketplace was the most important existential reality." The task is to dissolve the fiction of the author in order to see the brute reality of ambition and calculation, of writing as commodity production.

A powerful insight, and I think an important one. American writing has been viewed too much as a field of "themes" and cultural obsessions, not enough in light of specific strategies addressed to specific situations, especially economic ones. But as he pursues it, with brilliance, resoluteness and éclat, Wilson's insight grows overpowering and his writing given to overstatement. Is the marketplace the only situation, the only reality that mattered to these writers? Is it necessary to take them down so far in order to readjust the perspective? Wilson takes delight in showing that as American writing seems to be getting better in literary quality (a category he disdains) from Franklin, Irving and Garrison to Emerson, Dickinson and Whitman, it is actually getting much worse in social quality—more arrogant, less civic, more transcendent (a synonym for irresponsible) and politically impotent.

Franklin, a transitional figure in Wilson's argument, "still thought of readers as a potential constituency for action," but try to imagine Emily Dickinson "joining a movement for women's rights or an abolitionist society in the hope of actually accomplishing some instrumental purpose." Whitman creates his figure "by substituting the capacity to see for ability to do anything," and so, "when the poet has at last learned to see everything, there is nothing left for him but to die—as he does in the last lines of 'Song of Myself.'" The devaluation of the zeal of Garrison (he wanted more than anything else to be accepted as a successful writer), the ideas of Emerson (whose poet's "radical insights," "have no civic implications"), the stance of Dickinson, the democratic claims of Whitman, empties these writers of interest, delivers them as vacant testimonies of self-deception.

We learn very little here about actual markets and, most striking, nothing about readers or readership—about the effect of the displacement of patronage by the

Alan Trachtenberg's Reading American Photographs: Images as History, From Mathew Brady to Walker Evans *will be published this summer by Hill & Wang.*

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market (the rise of what Charvat called in a nicely ironic image "the people's patronage") on the habits and functions of reading, on the uses of writing to delineate stratified social and cultural spheres, and so on. Wilson does not show writers imagining readers; their predicament as sellers is strangely devoid of concern (and strategies deriving therefrom) with actual customers, but only with the predicament itself as something to be disguised, transmuted into hubristic claims of autonomy.

Wilson takes the market as a given, not a set of historically specifiable variables (Charvat's approach) but a broad undifferentiated fact of the writer's consciousness. The result is an argument keyed to history yet stripped of one kind of historical concreteness: the specific ways these writers actually negotiated actual market situations. Instead we learn how each allegorized his or her self-conception as a participant in a process which (as one can learn by reading Karl Marx, without consulting the Ticknor & Fields cost-books) converts persons into producers or consumers, and written ideas or experiences into commodities. But what it means to call a book a commodity, let alone "property" in the first instance, remains unexplored. Are published books the locus of alienated labor? Are they fetishized objects (the physical book itself? its contents?) manufactured and put into circulation solely for exchange rather than use value? What would it mean to "use" Emerson's *Nature* or Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*? Or to "exchange" cash for it? Without some inquiry into the meaning of "commodity" as applied to books, the term loses its usefulness. Are books the same, in their role as commodities, as shoes and stoves?

Wilson bypasses Charvat's institutional approach for the sake of more direct access to the minds of writers, to ideologies of authorship. Thus, while Charvat (who disappears from the book after the prefatory acknowledgment) claims that the literary profession and book trade had "no influence on Emily Dickinson's production of her poems, and very little on Emerson's *Nature*," Wilson argues just the opposite. Dickinson is a kind of test case, her very repudiation of commerce (and, as he has it, of "ordinary experience") serving as the negative instance which proves the point: her refusals (expressed poetically in ways Wilson describes as unoriginal, incoherent and attitudinal) actually show that "she really was a creature of the literary marketplace, perhaps its ultimate creature." Whitman, also exempted by Charvat from book-trade influence, comes under similar stricture; his "figure of the poet—his principal artistic creation" is revealed as "a reflex of his consciousness of the literary marketplace." Whitman was, in a phrase Wilson borrows from an early parodist of the poet, "finally, the 'essence of retail.'"

Wilson hurts his argument by seeming to reduce all beliefs, commitments, intellectual or aesthetic positions, to self-serving strategies. Emerson's "ideas and his esthetic practises," Wilson writes, "cannot be reduced to the level of mere intellectual belief." True, but should they then be reduced to mere calculation for "celebrity and profit"? This would be to squander the rich heuristic meanings of the concept of ideology, making it a mere reflex of personal self-interest—or does Wilson mean to say that the "figures of speech" invented by his writers represent a *class* ideology? He does seem to suggest this at one point, identifying Whitman with the mentality of "artisans, shopkeepers and small entrepreneurs." If so, we need to know much more about the social origins of this mentality which can take the form of fictions of authorship. *Figures of Speech* poses vital questions, but too often assumes that questions themselves serve as answers. □

Writers and the Market–II

CHRIS GOODRICH

You'd think, offhand, that publishers offering books about the publishing industry would seek to display its best side. They would urge authors of such books to examine the business in some detail; to be fair and complete. They would insist, at the very least, on good, clear, intelligent writing. The principal audience for a book on publishing, after all, is made up of writers and would-be writers, so an indifferent one proclaims loudly that the publisher doesn't much care about the quality of the work it puts out. If the publishing house doesn't enforce high standards when producing a book about a subject it knows intimately, when would it?

This analysis would make sense if book publishing were a rational business. But it isn't, and the result is that books about publishing tend to be rather worse than average. To some extent it's a case of the cobbler's children having no shoes, but a recent encounter with some new and newish books on publishing leads me to think there are larger forces at work. The most significant is that books about publishing are written by publishing insiders—people who have internalized the notion that books are written not for the ages but for next week. The books considered here are written by various members of the publishing community—a literary agent, an editor, a writer/editor/self-publisher, and a marketing consultant—yet they share a single overriding quality: glibness. This glibness is more prominent in some books than in others, but it manifests itself in the authors' common ability to raise, gloss over and inadvertently illustrate the problems of book publishing.

Chris Goodrich writes frequently about media issues.

IN THIS REVIEW

BEYOND THE BESTSELLER: A Literary Agent Takes You Inside the Book Business. *By Richard Curtis. New American Library. 380 pp. $18.95.*

THE FICTION EDITOR: A Book for Writers, Teachers, Publishers, Editors, and Anyone Else Devoted to Fiction. *By Thomas McCormack. St. Martin's. 202 pp. $12.95.*

PUBLISHER'S LUNCH: A Dialogue Concerning the Secrets of How Publishers Think & What Authors Can Do About It. *By Ernest Callenbach. Ten Speed. 141 pp. $11.95. Paper $7.95.*

HOW TO GET HAPPILY PUBLISHED. Third Edition. *By Judith Appelbaum. Harper & Row. 304 pp. $18.95.*

To his credit, literary agent Richard Curtis knows there's something wrong with the book business (who can go into a bookstore and think otherwise?) and his occasional forays into critical analysis make *Beyond the Bestseller: A Literary Agent Takes You Inside the Book*

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Business a good read. But he has a strange way of neutralizing his criticism through overstatement, as if he's determined not to be taken seriously. Curtis writes, for example, that publishing has become "entirely too idea-driven," a phrase he elaborates as "a tendency today to presell great ideas, then develop them in predictably formulaic plots and package them for an audience that has been conditioned for formulas by television." He's right—but why blame "ideas" for the way ideas are sold? If anything, publishing should be more idea-driven—at least if the notions considered are real and challenging, not the stereotyped, high-concept Hollywoodisms that Curtis seems to criticize.

I write "seems to" because Curtis's fighting words, while no doubt heartfelt, don't appear to translate into action. Most of his clients, evidently, are genre writers; Curtis himself has written not just a mystery (Edgar-nominated) but also novelizations of horror films like *Halloween* and *Squirm*; *Beyond the Bestseller* is a collection of fifty-four columns written for a science-fiction magazine. Curtis may disparage formulas, yet he makes his living selling them, which is to say that he's a better representative of the problem than the solution. He's caught, like most of us, between God and Mammon, and sounds only disingenuous when predicting darkly that our culture will be "irreversibly impoverished" if "we" fail to address the troubles of the publishing industry.

Curtis appreciates the problematic nature of his position enough to give a vigorous defense of genre writing, a tidal wave on today's fiction market. Its key element is the assertion that "most authors who achieve stardom . . . emerge only after a long, slow, and often painful gestation in the netherworld of penny-a-word pulps, esoteric magazines, or even pornography." That's a gross exaggeration, but the reader can rectify it by replacing the word "stardom" with "enormous commercial success"—a switch that makes it clear Curtis is talking about the likes of Stephen King, Sidney Sheldon and Janet Dailey (one of Curtis's clients), not Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler. Curtis also writes:

> If it were not for the immense revenues generated by science fiction, romance, male action-adventure, and other types of popular fiction at which so many literary authors and critics look down their noses, there would be no money for publishers to risk on first novels, ex-

"Schell brilliantly captures the jarring schizophrenia that is today's China."
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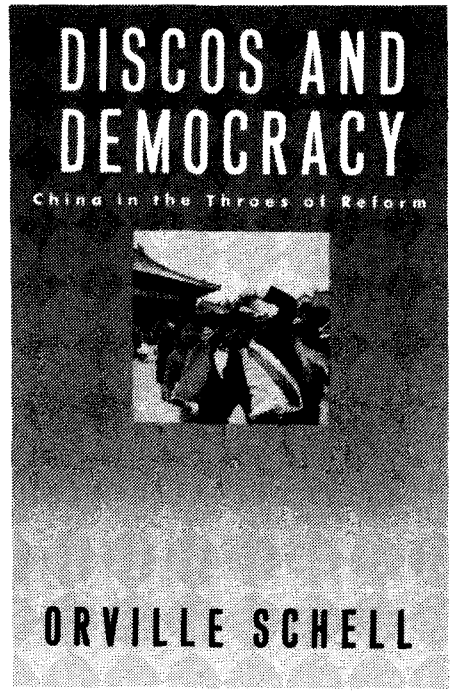

Straight from the pages of his most recent book, DISCOS AND DEMOCRACY: *China in the Throes of Reform*, Orville Schell, China-watcher for two decades and now the most cogent analyst on the nightly news, explains why China's love-hate relationship with the West has finally erupted, why it was inevitable, and what the consequences might be.

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perimental fiction, and other types of serious but commercially marginal literary enterprises.

This is the publishers' standard response to criticism that bookstores are awash in schlock, and a few years ago it might even have been true. By now, however, it's pretty clear that publishers put out schlock not to subsidize books they really love but to buy more schlock. Genre writing is no longer a craft-sharpener for the writer or a bill-payer for the publisher; it's become an end in itself.

Curtis suggests a number of reforms for book publishing, one being the requirement that editors write novels before being allowed to edit them. (He may even be serious. He boasts in the same chapter that he knows "several professional writers who wrote full-length novels over a weekend.") I don't know whether editor Thomas McCormack has written a book before, but I can't imagine *The Fiction Editor: A Book for Writers, Teachers, Publishers, Editors, and Anyone Else Devoted to Fiction* being a second effort. I mean, would a serious writer let stand locutions like "Words tend to hypostatize discretenesses to things"; "Action frantically fisted on like vindicating ketchup"; "A writer might climb from initium to masterprelibation, and the editor might record the moment in an axiom"?

McCormack, granted, isn't a professional writer. But he is the editorial director of St. Martin's Press, a position that should obligate him to refrain from publishing any book, including his own, that fails to be entertaining, informative or challenging. (This one is ultimately all three, but not in the way its author/publisher intended.) The idea—there's that word again—behind the book is actually quite good, but as presented, it works much better as an example of publishing's deficiencies than an exploration of the fiction editor's craft. *The Fiction Editor* has passed through the editorial process quite uncontaminated by proper editing; it is raw material, unshaped and unsharpened. I can't imagine it making sense to anyone besides the author—and I have doubts about that, too.

I'm not McCormack's perfect reader, obviously, but it's difficult to believe such a person exists. McCormack goes out of his way to be obscure and troublesome—characteristics he mistakes, apparently, for what he calls a "hard-won distinctiveness of style." Rather than straightening out his ideas and then putting them in plain English, McCormack places that burden squarely on his readers, leaving an enormous amount of room for confusion and misinterpretation, and planting the suspicion that McCormack himself doesn't know what he means. I'm sure every writer and editor would like to have a workable definition of editorial craft, but McCormack's weakness for jargon and neologism disserves his profession; it underscores the perception that editors are quick to voice opinions but frequently unable to back them up with explanations.

In fairness, though, I should let McCormack speak for himself. "Character" and "situation," he writes, together form a "soma" or a "somacluster." Huh? "Situation" is composed of "character, circuitry" and "circumstance." Okay, I can live with that, but why do casts of characters have "conflicting vectors" and "electrical wiring"? And why are all these elements set in motion by a "gadding force" when most of us are satisfied with plot device? More horrors: There are "two kinds of sensibility": "gustant," which tastes and judges, and "salivant," which registers anxiety and other sensations. (Author, hear thyself, page 161: "That's what an editor is before all else: a listener.") And let's not forget "prelibation ('foretaste')," defined as "a longing or craving or appetite *the specific satisfier of which is not yet named.*" I'll spare the reader further, except to note that McCormack goes on to call writer's block "a failure of prelibation." Would that he suffered this condition!

McCormack obviously has strong feelings about his subject, but seems not to understand that's just the first step in the making of a book. Similar things can be said about *Publisher's Lunch: A Dialogue Concerning the Secrets of How Publishers Think & What Authors Can Do About It*, written by a university press editor best known for the self-published, early New Age *Ecotopia*. Ernest Callenbach is nothing if not sincere; trouble is, the form through which he's chosen to scrutinize publishing—a dialogue between a professor turned popular writer and a former student paramour turned editor—is unnecessary. Callenbach knows a lot about publishing, but the information he imparts is diminished, not enhanced, by the artificial situation he creates.

Callenbach's alter ego, Jim, has asked Michelle to look at his manuscript, *Home on the Road*. It's a promising subject; Jim has spent six months with retired people in trailer homes, and to his surprise has found a complete community interested in new kinds of families, new kinds of ideas, new ways of approaching life. Over a series of lunches Jim and Michelle discuss the problems of publishing the book, which Jim sums up in a single sentence: "It just doesn't fit into the usual categories." Michelle at first isn't sure the book is publishable, but eventually becomes swept up in Jim's enthusiasm. Romance blooms for a second time, though the course of love doesn't run smooth in this instance, either. Michelle says she won't publish the book; Jim curses and then confesses love; they hop in the sack; Michelle says she was lying, that she does want to publish Jim's book, but first had to make sure publication and love were unconnected; Jim says he's tape-recorded their meetings. The closing scene, of course, is their decision to turn the tapes into *Publisher's Lunch*.

It's all very neat and happy. Unfortunately, the subtext of the book contradicts the text, for while Callenbach seems to assure us that publishers do indeed take on challenging books like *Home on the Road*, he and his publisher have put in readers' hands a book of pure sentimentalism. Jim is right to say that America "needs" *Home on the Road*, but *Publisher's Lunch* makes it even less likely that books like his will be printed; it's one more bit of fluff eclipsing substance. *Publisher's Lunch* is a living example of what Michelle calls the "chronic overproduction" of the book business, and it would likely not exist if publishers practiced birth control, as Jim suggests. Without birth control, Gresham's law takes hold: the bad books drive out, or at least obscure, the good.

One book that will never be driven out of the publishing-book market is Judith Appelbaum's *How to Get Happily Published*, now available in a third

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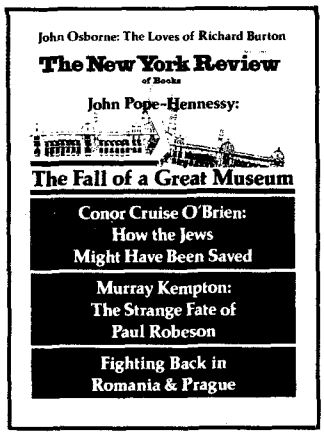

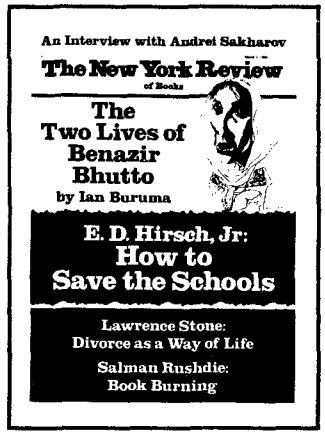

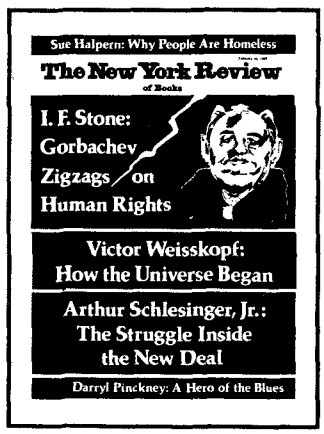

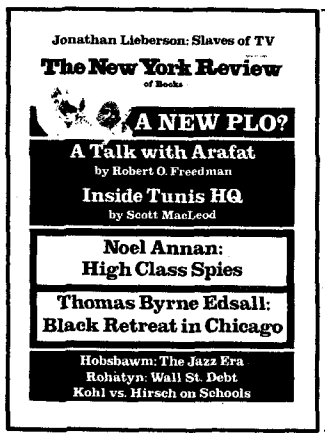

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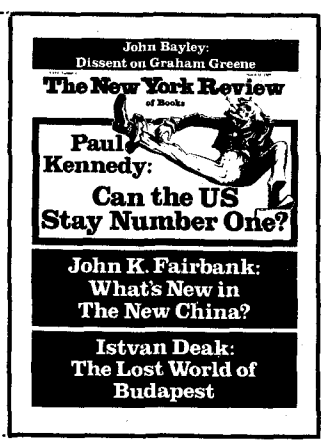

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edition. As how-to books go it's probably quite good, but it left me with a hollow feeling in the pit of my stomach. (That evolved into indigestion when Appelbaum referred to *The Fiction Editor* as "pungent, persuasive, engaging and edifying.") Although she says 40,000 books are published every year in the United States—Curtis says 50,000 and Callenbach (defining "book" loosely) says 60,000, which doesn't inspire trust in anyone's figures—Appelbaum doesn't press would-be writers to make sure they have something to say. Her basic message comes on the book's first page, when she writes: "It is largely within your power to determine whether a publisher will buy your work and whether the public will buy it once it's released." I can read that sentence in only two ways; as well-meaning but misguided encouragement or as an invitation to self-censorship.

Granted, Appelbaum aims the message at "writers, would-be writers and people who have important things to say" in print, and the first section of the book is called "Getting the Words Right." She knows that the writing process and the publishing process are intimately connected, and emphasizes that well-written, well-substantiated books are more likely to get published than poorly written, poorly conceived books. At the same time, however, Appelbaum's rah-rah tone—as in the "happily" of the book's title—made me feel it should come with a bumper sticker saying, "Publishing: Love It or Leave It." She provides a nice, complete tour of the book business, but it seems as suggestive of publishing as Disneyland is of the United States.

Applebaum writes, again at the beginning, that in publishing "failures abound because hardly anybody treats getting published as if it were a rational, manageable activity—like practicing law or laying bricks—in which knowledge coupled with skill and application can ensure success." I disagree, or at least would have disagreed before my marathon session with these books, for they demonstrate that she's probably right. Publishing is a business, they say, a business driven by the requirements of the marketplace, and it no longer worries about the fact that publishing creates demand as much as responds to it, that it shapes books to fit its sales techniques rather than editing them into the best possible works. High quality is simply no longer necessary in books, even books on publishing, because publishing on the whole takes more pride in its bottom line than in its role as a guardian of culture. Curtis, at the last, is right: American society will be "irreversibly impoverished" if publishing continues to do business in disposable books rather than books that add to our understanding of ourselves. □

Coming to Terms With Terror

ELAYNE RAPPING

ACCIDENT: A Day's News. *By Christa Wolf. Translated by Heike Schwarzbauer and Rick Pakvorian. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 113 pp. $15.95.*

At the time of the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island I was living in Pennsylvania, not far—especially if the wind shifted a bit—from whatever fallout there might have been. I recall crazily earnest discussions about packing the car with bottled water and my two small children and going—where? To Ohio? The idea, obviously ludicrous, brought dread, not mirth. There are certain events that transform one's sense of the world, one's place in it, one's politics, one's assumptions about the future. Three Mile Island was one.

The East German writer Christa Wolf has produced a haunting novel about another such event, the Chernobyl accident, and its complex effect on one woman. The nameless narrator is a writer, a mother and a grandmother, a concerned human being. The novel takes place in a single day in April 1986, and recounts the thoughts, feelings and phone conversations of the narrator as she goes about her daily routine alone in her home in a small village. She is trying to navigate the unknown territory of life after nuclear disaster and, at the same time, awaits news of her brother, undergoing surgery to remove a brain tumor.

Accident's focus is the destructiveness of modern technology and the mysteries of the soul that impel it to invent such self-annihilating marvels. "No surgeon could penetrate through to that hectic group of neural connections in the brains of those men who thought up the procedures for the so-called peaceful utilization of nuclear energy," the narrator thinks bitterly. And yet she is helplessly awaiting news that the cold-blooded expertise of medical science has been skillful enough to heal her brother, to return him to the state of thinking, feeling "selfhood" that scientific knowledge threatens to obliterate on a global scale.

Wolf's prose is as dense and spare as poetry and similar in its method. There is no narrative imperative to the book's structure, no "events" to propel the action. There is only the narrator thinking and waiting. Thought follows thought and all connect metaphorically to the novel's theme. At one point a friend calls to "hear my voice" and ask "whether I actually knew that she liked me." This leads the narrator to ponder what people really want and to conclude it is "to experience strong emotions and they want to be loved." From there she meditates on the possibility that the world of scientific research is really a "substitute gratification . . . a substitute life" for those who have lost their sense of what life can and should be. Next, wandering into her garden she notices that the zucchini plants have sprouted, recalls happy family feasts which may now never recur and worries about how her daughter will safely feed the grandchildren. Nature itself has become alien, fearsome, toxic. Finally, she muses on "the problem of what to do with the libraries full of nature poems." "Calling [the nuclear eruption] a 'cloud'"—one of the classic images of Romantic nature poetry—she thinks "is merely an indication of our inability to keep pace linguistically with the progress of science."

I think it is no accident that it is a woman who has written this beautiful but painful meditation on the human implications of nuclear technology. The book is infused with a feminist sensibility; the symbiotic interdependence of private and public life—what feminists used to mean by "the personal is the political"—is a given. Nor is there any doubt that it is men who have created the circumstances of the perilous modern existence which Chernobyl and Three Mile Island most frighteningly represent; men who have been socialized to fragment themselves so as to think of the hazards of nuclear technology only as a technical problem.

The image of Faust occurs throughout the novel as do passages like these:

> A list of activities which these men of science and technology presumably do not pursue or which, if forced upon them, they would consider a waste of time: Changing a baby's diapers. Cook-

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ing, shopping with a child on one's arm or in the baby carriage. Doing the laundry, hanging it up to dry, taking it down, folding it, ironing it, darning it. Sweeping the floor, mopping it, polishing it, vacuuming it. Dusting. Sewing. Knitting. Crocheting. Embroidering. Doing the dishes. Doing the dishes. Doing the dishes. Taking care of a sick child. Thinking up stories to tell. Singing songs.

Before male readers, who more and more do these things, explode in outrage, let me reassure them that Wolf is talking about traditional male behavior in a broad historic context. In fact, as a writer and an intellectual, the narrator includes herself in that passage. "And how many of these activities," she asks herself, "do I myself consider a waste of time?" It's a question all of us have asked ourselves. But for Wolf it functions primarily as a symbol of that aspect of the modern condition that fragments us, that separates us from what traditionally has been our relationship to nature and the life cycle. The narrator sees herself standing at a crossroads, loving what is clearly a lost past and fearing an unknown and ominous future.

Near the end of the book she tells of watching a television discussion of "the accident." It is as perceptive a comment on how the media work to reassure and mystify as I've read. "That evening," she says, "they put some gentlemen in front of the cameras who, solely on account of their nicely tailored gray or bluish-gray suits, the matching ties, the matching haircuts, their prudent choice of words and the whole official capacity of their posture, radiated a soothing effect." She reflects that most people watching—herself included—"after a hard day's work and [with] their beer—wine in my case, what of it? . . . want to be presented with something that makes them happy." "It would be unjust," she adds with irony, "to reproach them for this behavior merely because it contributes to our deaths."

While there is no resolution to the book's dilemma—how could there be?—it is, in a strange way, ultimately comforting. In its necessarily futile efforts to understand and come to terms with a terrifying situation, it becomes what it mourns, an experience of wholeness and integration. The narrator's very effort to face the meaning of nuclear power, to accept its unfathomability and yet to take responsibility for whatever can be understood or done, is cathartic and healing.

Wolf's sense of personal isolation may seem politically irresponsible to some. After all, we can protest, we can organize, we can act. But that is such a narrow reading of this profound and courageous work. Wolf is recording an experience of loss, impotence and terror. To read this novel is to plunge into that abyss in the best possible company. □

THEATER.

MOIRA HODGSON

Cymbeline
Amulets Against the Dragon Forces
Aristocrats

Cymbeline is not an easy play, and it is not often performed. Its most recent major New York production, by the Public Theater, was in 1971, and it is appearing once again under that company's auspices as part of the Shakespeare "marathon." That play, which was one of Shakespeare's last, is said to have been written after his retirement to Stratford and is so uneven that some scholars believe it must have been a collaboration. Samuel Johnson, never one to mince words, said that he would not "waste criticism upon unresisting imbecility, upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation."

Cymbeline is a mythic fairy tale, a mongrel of a play set variously in early Britain, a fairyland Wales and a Rome ruled by Caesar but Renaissance in manners. The complicated plot involves the marriage of Imogen—daughter of the British king Cymbeline—to Posthumus, in defiance of her father who wishes her to marry the loutish son of her wicked stepmother, the Queen. Posthumus is banished, and there follow ghosts, sexual intrigue, a full-scale war, Jupiter descending from the heavens, abducted brothers living in a cave, disguise and murder. It ends with "Pardon's the word to all"—and order emerges from chaos.

Because the play violates the unities of time and space—to put it mildly—unity of style is necessary to bring together the disparate elements. But playing it as Gothic melodrama in Victorian England ("In the midst of Celtic ruins," the program notes have it), as directed by Jo-Anne Akalaitis, is not the answer. The play, like *The Winter's Tale* or *The Tempest*, asks for fantasy. It wears the Victorian setting like a corset.

For a start, the set at the beginning suggests not so much England as Scotland. George Tsypin's design, which would fit

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a low-budget *Lucia di Lammermoor*, makes use of dizzying slide projections that look at times like a light show from the sixties—seen without being high. The actors are outfitted for the Scottish Highlands in tartans, trews and tam-o'-shanters, with ladies-in-waiting decked out like a dance team from the Balkans. Pisanio, Imogen's faithful servant, dresses like Sherlock Holmes and rides a miniature bicycle. She takes refuge in a cave near Milford Haven where her long-lost brothers wear warpaint like members of an American Indian tribe. The action is swept along by a live orchestra relentlessly hammering out Philip Glass's music, which acts on the brain like a pneumatic drill. It is fine in the battle scenes and even when used to underscore tension (as though the play needed such help), but as background music it could be the soundtrack to an aspirin commercial.

The actors declaim rather than recite the poetry and the acting is mostly ludicrous. Joan Cusack as Imogen has a frog in her throat and a lisp; she recites Shakespeare like the heroine of a high school production. Jeffrey Nordling's Posthumus, his hair in a ponytail, is charmless and glum; Joan MacIntosh as the Queen is straight from Walt Disney's *Snow White*, all heaving bosom, heavy breathing and scratch-your-eyes-out fingernails. Jupiter arrives as Little Lord Fauntleroy on an eagle. Peter Francis James as Pisanio, the only one onstage to show any sensitivity to Shakespeare's verse, speaks in a fake English accent.

The one scene that works does so simply because it is camped up by Michael Cumpsty, who has a gift for timing. He plays the villainous Iachimo as though he were Douglas Fairbanks doing Zorro (he is even dressed for the part), and his attempted seduction of Imogen and subsequent treachery are like sendups of a silent movie. He wears the heavy penciled brows and lipstick of those movies too—and naturally is hissed by the audience. Even Imogen, so earnest and wooden, comes to life when she is onstage with Iachimo in a way that suggests she would be far better off with him than with the dreary Posthumus.

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There has been much shrill debate over the thorny topic of interracial casting recently, stemming from John Simon's review of some of the actors in the last play in this series, *The Winter's Tale* (a production that was almost as muddled as this *Cymbeline*). If all theater involves suspension of disbelief, how far can you go before it is no longer suspended? When Mark Lamos used an interracial cast in *Measure for Measure* at Lincoln Center recently, it worked because it suited the style of his production, which was set in a vaguely contemporary city. I'm hardly saying you can have an interracial cast only when the setting is modern, but using one does require some sensitivity to context. In Akalaitis's *Cymbeline*, we are asked to accept brothers, one black, one Hispanic, from a white father. Imogen can't tell the difference between the headless bodies of Posthumus (who is white) and Cloten (who is black, even though the Queen, his mother, is white). The audience at *Cymbeline* has enough trouble trying to figure out what is going on and where they are without having to cope with such inconsistencies.

Paul Zindel's *Amulets Against the Dragon Forces*, a new play at the Circle Repertory, is another sort of Gothic drama, putting a dying widow, an alcoholic gay longshoreman, a hustler, a kleptomaniac itinerant nurse and her misfit adolescent son under one roof in Staten Island in the 1950s. This may sound a bit far-fetched, but apart from a few awkward speeches Zindel's play is exceptionally well crafted, well written and convincing. Zindel reminds me a little of Joe Orton; he has the same ear for the abrasive, absurd and nasty mixed with the formalized and genteel: "Who stole my sundries?" asks the longshoreman, burrowing through the kitchen cabinet. The son uses sophisticated words in unexpected places and reflects his mother's gentilities in his speech. "I don't know much about herbs and garnishings," he tells the hustler, Harold.

Matt McGrath is extraordinarily moving as Chris, the lonely, precocious adolescent whose mother makes a living looking after invalids. Unfortunately Zindel doesn't know how to end the play so he gives Chris a secret that is totally out of character. But the acting is first-rate, especially—in addition to the remarkable McGrath—John Spencer as Floyd, the abusive longshoreman with more than a touch of Jimmy Cagney, and Deborah Hedwall, as Chris's divorced, suffocating mother. When Chris calls his father, who lives in Orlando, "near Ripley's Believe It or Not," to beg to be allowed to move there with him, the conversation, while predictable, is so painful as to be almost unbearable.

Brian Friel's *Aristocrats*, at the Manhattan Theater Club, also deals with family conflict, but here it is a metaphor for Ireland. A decaying Irish Catholic family, who have grown up in a gaunt Georgian house on the top of the hill, meet for a daughter's wedding. Present is a sociologist from Chicago who has come to study the Irish Catholic gentry. The children have all married beneath them; each has a terrible secret—and all the while the tyrannical father is dying upstairs.

If this sounds a bit familiar, it is. Despite good performances, especially by Niall Buggy as Casimir, the affable, blustery, childlike brother who loves Chopin and lives in a fantasy world, the play never really comes to life. *Aristocrats* owes a large debt to Chekhov, but it is not nearly as compelling. One thing the Irish and the Russians have in common is that they love to go on so. □

MUSIC.

GENE SANTORO

Jazz on Videotape

Time to hook that VCR up to the stereo system—if you haven't already. All kinds of music videos are making their way into the marketplace. Let's start with jazz.

One of the best historical reflections on a career and life is the video analogue of Gary Giddins's outstanding book *Celebrating Bird* (Sony). In fifty-eight minutes, thirty seconds, you get whisked from alto great Charlie Parker's early days in his Kansas City birthplace to his interaction with peers like Dizzy Gillespie, Thelonious Monk and Kenny Clarke as they created bebop in after-hours joints and jam sessions in the Big Apple in the 1940s. You also see, in unromanticized fashion, the drug-induced breakdowns and alcoholic lurches that landed Bird in Camarillo State Hospital and finally a Kansas City grave at age 34.

But the true focus here is the music—and that you get plenty of, from discussions of Bird idols like Leon Chu Berry

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and Jimmy Dorsey to rare clips of that bebop incubator, the Billy Eckstine Band. Period newsreel footage and stills flesh out the visual documentation, while on audio Bird's edgy, vocalic alto etches its lines of astonishing speed and invention. If you're remotely interested in the shape of jazz over the past fifty years, check this out.

The lives of the greatest jazz players have, with rare exceptions, been grinding and onerous. *Mingus: Charles Mingus—1968* (Rhapsody) is a gut-wrenching portrait of the bassist-composer at one of his lowest points: He's shown being evicted from his lower Manhattan loft with his small daughter, in scenes both poignant and infuriating.

Naturally, there's lots of music (in mono sound) from concerts and rehearsals and informal footage: Mingus playing in a nightclub near Boston with longtime drummer/alter ego Dannie Richmond, pianist Walter Bishop, and sax giants John Gilmore and Charles McPherson; Mingus conducting his big band; Mingus doodling on piano in his loft with his daughter. The music's deep-blues resonance is amplified as Mingus delivers diatribes about racism in the United States, violence, art and commerce. In fifty-eight minutes, it's a glimpse into one of the great souls of jazz.

Of course, racism is hardly confined to the United States; South Africa specializes in it. *A Brother With Perfect Timing* (Rhapsody) treats the geographical, cultural and musical odyssey of one of that wretched land's escapees, pianist Abdullah Ibrahim "Dollar Brand."

Brother's ninety minutes are put to panoramic use, outlining the pianist's polyglot musical background in Capetown as well as his American jazz roots. Ibrahim, who was first recorded in 1963 thanks to Duke Ellington, has lived in exile in New York City since 1976. Besides being a consummate musician, he is a cultural critic who deftly limns some of the fundamental differences between European-based aesthetics and the rest of the world's sense of how art functions within society. And there's plenty of his moving, buoyant, hybridized South African jazz with his group, Ekaya, to underline his points.

Multi-instrumentalist/composer Ornette Coleman looms as one of the major cross-cultural figures of the past thirty years in American music, playing a crucial role in scenes as diverse as the A.A.C.M. in Chicago in the 1960s and the downtown New York fermentation of the past few years. So it's gratifying to find that he's been caught on video in two different, albeit somewhat artsy ways.

One of the most fascinating small groups Ornette has led was his trio in the mid-1960s, with himself on alto, trumpet and violin; David Izenson on bass; and Charles Moffett on percussion. Although it's only twenty-six minutes long, *David, Moffett & Ornette: The Ornette Coleman Trio 1966* (Rhapsody) presents three days' worth of that group at and around its 1966 recording date for *Who's Crazy*, an experimental film with the Living Theater for which Ornette wrote the sound track. Full of Ornette's vibrant, resonant bluesy keens, the video also captures telling vignettes: Ornette and the others arguing with the session producer about retaking sections because of the producer's mistakes, for instance.

On a more positive note, the musicians individually discuss their music and its motivations. Ornette, for instance, observes, "People . . . say, 'This is the most way-out thing I can think of—so I'm gonna put you there.' That makes me safer." At another point Moffett, the most fiery of the trio, explodes: "Ornette brought me in nine tunes that he wrote between Tuesday and Thursday. Where'd he come from, man?" This tape gives you an introductory answer.

Ornette: Made in America (Caravan of Dreams) offers another response to that same query. It matches Ornette's Cubist-collage sounds with carefully selected and edited visuals—which makes it fascinating and perplexing by turns. Fragments of scenes are repeated, for instance, in the same apparently haphazard way that melodies reappear in Ornette's solos.

Though it's hardly a straight biographical video, *Made in America* does pack in an awful lot of information. There's old footage of bassist Charlie Haden rehearsing with Ornette and his 12-year-old son Denardo on drums, after Ornette has interviewed Denardo about his self-evolved techniques; there's a rare performance of Ornette's ambitious "Sun Suite" with trio and full orchestra; there's Ornette at the March on Washington in 1963; there's Ornette in Morocco with writer Robert Palmer playing with the legendary Master Musicians of Jajouka. Interviews with those who know and study Ornette clarify things periodically. And the whole video is scored with Ornette's mu-

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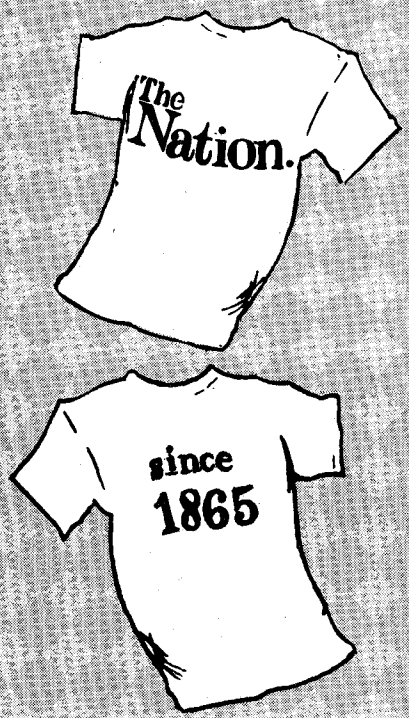

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sic, including the rarely heard symphonic "Skies of America." Difficult as it can seem in spots, this video is a terrific way into Ornette's gnarled, revolutionary and unique musical world.

As far as straight jazz-in-performance goes, the single most consistent source is the Jazz at the Smithsonian series. The tapes run about an hour and boast fine sound; they open with a standard introduction about jazz as the fusion of African and European sounds and feature intermission interview segments. Below are two of the best.

Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers (Sony) is a fine way to meet the mentor of several generations of hard boppers. Drummer Blakey here leads a swaggering edition of his long-running group, this one featuring Wynton and Branford Marsalis. The entire band is in top form and blows hard and well, goaded by the patented press rolls and cymbal splashes of Mrs. Blakey's only son. Watching the septuagenarian Blakey hide one drumstick under his arm while playing and grin impishly at the camera underlines just how much fun this exuberant music can be.

Benny Carter (Sony) displays the master composer-arranger-altoist-trumpeter fronting a loose-limbed quintet of underrated veterans of the jazz wars, including pianist Ken Barron. Carter was one of the alto models of the Swing Era, along with Ellington's Johnny Hodges. It's astonishing how well this octogenarian has kept his burnished, blues-tinged tone; how easily he swings the beat and unfurls the long, melodic lilts that characteristically end with a kind of sonic nudge to the ribs. Stretching standards like "Get Happy" and "Honeysuckle Rose" to the limits of their formidable musical imaginations, the group members are clearly having a blast. So will you. □

LETTERS.

(*Continued From Page 2*)

same boat, and it is sinking fast. The people who feel it the strongest live in "toxic towns" like Jacksonville, Arkansas, and Ponca City, Oklahoma. A network that brings them together is developing, and it is high time that the Group of Ten do whatever it can to seek more common ground. *Dick Russell*

The Nation welcomes letters – typed, double spaced and no longer than 300 words, please.

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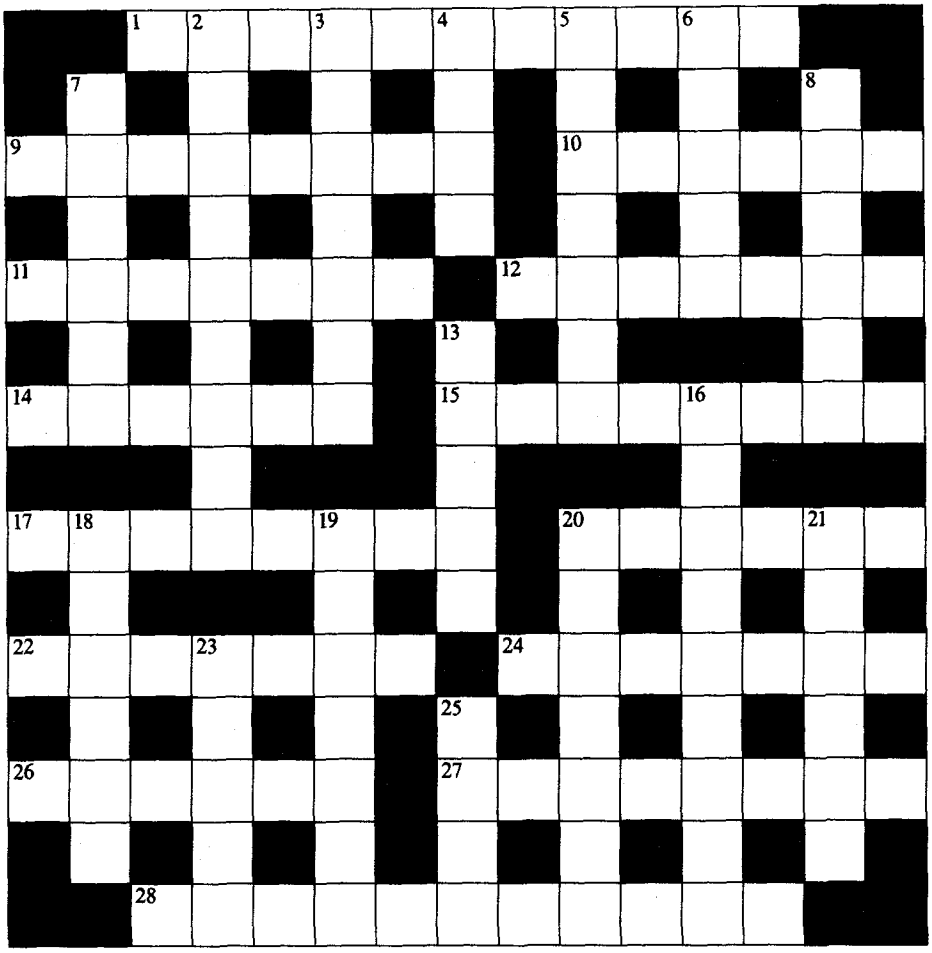

ACROSS

1 See 10
9 and 8 down Suggests the culprit is encamped on a deliberately illegal action. (8,6)
10 and 1 They should look pretty good when they arrive! (Such comments should probably be screened.) (6,11)
11 A loud beginning, on reflection (with some polish) put into confusion. (9)
12 Collects those that might not be quite so stupid in the afternoon? (7)
14 Is such a foolish person in bed? Quite the other way around—something to do with the throat that's going around! (6)
15 In such jobs "Olé!" tends to be out of date. (8)
17 One of Berlin's songs was about an early one he disliked. (8)
20 Does one fly from such a children's disease? (6)
22 Like a cross, it might describe a life or death situation. (7)
24 Sudden prosperity has the tinge of financial failure at heart—but one has no large amount of interest with it. (7)
26 Adheres to possible breakers of 13 when associated with 21, when what one says is rather innocuous. (6)
27 What promotes masculine characteristics might be a sort of grand one! (8)
28 "Grab that guy"? You might attract attention with one! (5,6)

DOWN

2 Does it imply a cryptic sound? (Rip the letters that might be on one.) (9)
3 Part of the race might be on sled. (7)
4 Strangely enough, you might have a fever with one. (4)
5 As a short ending, what might have a firm beginning has some confusion, but such are possibly earned. (7)
6 They don't hurt, according to the clue of 26. (5)
7 Such as gridiron tortures? (6)
8 See 9 across
13 Part of the job one sees as a dangerous indication when under the skull. (5)
16 It might describe taking ways, though you might find ours clean out of it! (9)
18 Mistakes made by a traitor, in time! (6)
19 Raise the sail, and thus (in classic form) get the lowest level in a certain period. (7)
20 Made especially for one when something like a beet comes up. (2,5)
21 Caused by onsets of gall trouble? (6)
23 Two small organizations holding a fine ingredient for drink! (5)
25 Find fault with the fish? (4)

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